DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 419 888 UD 032 365

AUTHOR	Lawton, Stephen B., Ed.; Tanenzapt, Elaine, Ed.; Townsend, Richard G., Ed.
TITLE	Education and Community: The Collaborative Solution. Proceedings of the International Conference Linking Research and Practice (Toronto, Ontario, Canada, March 3-5, 1994).
INSTITUTION	Ontario Inst. for Studies in Education, Toronto. Dept. of Educational Administration.
ISBN	ISBN-0-7744-9821-8
PUB DATE	1994-03-00
NOTE	158p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 252 Bloor Street, West Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 1V6.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Proceedings (021)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC07 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Cooperation; Educational Improvement; *Educational Policy; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; Models; Program Descriptions; Program Effectiveness; Public Schools; School Based Management; *School Community Relationship; Tables (Data)
IDENTIFIERS	Canada; Stakeholders

ABSTRACT

These proceedings are divided into two sections that explore collaboration between schools and communities. In Part I, the first four papers, analytic frameworks are described that provide different perspectives on collaboration. In Part II, descriptions of concrete programs and advice for developing better school-community relations are offered. The following papers are included: (1) "Policy Options for Building School-Community Relations" (James G. Cibulka); (2) "Families and Schools Working Together in a Pluralistic Society" (Nancy Chavkin); (3) "Poverty and Education: Conceptions and Misconceptions" (Benjamin Levin); (4) "Students and Academics Look at School Improvement" (Richard G. Townsend and George Bedard); (5) "Reaching Education's Publics" (Norman Robinson); (6) "Stakeholder Attitudes towards Community Involvement in New Brunswick Schools: Implications for Collaborative Solutions" (R. M. McDonald); (7) "The Policy and Practice of Community Enrichment of Schools" (Hanne B. Mawhinney); (8) "The Collaborative School and the Empowered Community: A Total School-Based Management Model" (Adrian Guldemond); and (9) "Finding the Common Ground" (Gordon Cressy). An appendix contains the conference agenda. Each paper contains references. (Contains 3 figures and 25 tables.) (SLD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 419 888

Education and Community:

The Collaborative Solution

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

● Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Stephen B. Lawton

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

Edited by:
Stephen B. Lawton
Elaine Tanenzapt
Richard G. Townsend

The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
Department of Educational Administration

UD032365

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY:

THE COLLABORATIVE SOLUTION

Proceedings of the International Conference
Linking Research and Practice

Edited by:

Stephen B. Lawton
Elaine Tanenzapf
Richard G. Townsend

March 3-5, 1994

The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

Acknowledgements

We appreciate the support from the research team involved in the Schools and the Community project funded by the Ministry of Education and Training and the work performed by the advisory committee: John Davis, Stephen B. Lawton, Joyce Scane, Richard G. Townsend and Rouleen Wignall

The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education has three prime functions: to conduct programs of graduate study in education, to undertake research in education and to assist in the implementation of the findings of educational studies. The Institute is a college chartered by an Act of the Ontario Legislature in 1965. It is affiliated with the University of Toronto for graduate studies purposes.

The publications program of the Institute has been established to make available information and materials arising from studies in education, to foster the spirit of critical inquiry, and to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas about education. The opinions expressed should be viewed as those of the contributors.

Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Main entry under title Education and community: the collaborative solution

Proceedings of a conference held Mar. 3-5, 1994 at The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto.

Includes bibliographical references.
ISBN 0-7744-9821-8

1. Community and school – Congresses. I. Lawton, Stephen B. II. Tanenzapf, Elaine, date. III. Townsend, Richard G. (Richard Gordon), date. IV. Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. Dept. of Educational Administration.

LC215.E38 1994 370.19'31 C94-932082

© The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
1994
252 Bloor Street West
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
M5S 1V6

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form without permission from the publisher, except for brief passages quoted for review purposes.

Contents

Part I: PERSPECTIVES ON SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Introduction
Stephen B. Lawton

Policy Options for Building School-Community Relations
James G. Cibulka 1

Families and Schools Working Together in a Pluralistic Society
Nancy Chavkin 13

Poverty and Education: Conceptions and Misconceptions
Benjamin Levin 24

Students and Academics Look at School Improvement
Richard G. Townsend and George Bedard 41

Part II: THE PRACTICE OF LINKING SCHOOLS TO COMMUNITIES

Reaching Education's Publics
Norman Robinson 61

Stakeholder Attitudes Towards Community Involvement in New Brunswick Schools: Implications for Collaborative Solutions
R.M. McDonald 75

The Policy and Practice of Community Enrichment of Schools
Hanne B. Mawhinney 97

The Collaborative School and the Empowered Community: A Total School-Based Management Model
Adrian Guldemond 119

Finding the Common Ground
Gordon Cressy 137

APPENDIX 148

Introduction

Stephen B. Lawton
The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

Recently, an African proverb has been widely quoted: *It takes an entire village to raise a child.* This idea seems fresh because it has been forgotten or relegated to the fringes of modern, Western societies where formal educational systems, driven by their own internal logic, have assumed increasing responsibility for the rearing of children. Schools are expected to provide children breakfast and lunch, pre- and post-school care, health and dental check-ups, counselling, sex-education, condoms, and day-care for the offspring of young mothers completing a high school education. It is as if, in a world of civic disarray, the school is the only civic institution which carries on the work of the village.

Of course, schools cannot do all of these things and teach too; in the long run, schools can be no more effective than are the communities that support them. The gulf between schools and their communities, and the dependence each has on the other, is becoming increasingly apparent. Communities need what schools have to offer; yet communities also need to ensure that what schools offer is what communities, in fact, need. How the two can collaborate to fulfill their mutual responsibilities is a complex and often subtle matter. Sound ties must be developed that facilitate communication, action, and the resolution of problems.

These proceedings are divided into two sections that explore these matters. In Part I, analytic frameworks are portrayed that provide different perspectives on the matter. In a comprehensive overview, James Cibulka considers an array of policy approaches to the issue of school-community relations; his work is complemented by those of Nancy Chavkin, who focuses on key problems in pluralistic societies, and Benjamin Levin, who focuses on educational difficulties created by the persistence of impoverished families and children. Finally, Richard Townsend and George Bedard contrast the thinking of academics with that of secondary school students as to how schools can improve.

Taken together, these four papers provide a variety of perspectives for considering and acting upon the relations between schools and their communities. No approach offers the definitive answer; but selecting from among them, and combining the insights each has to offer, may suggest productive directions for research and policy development.

Part II offers descriptions of concrete programs and advice for developing better school-community relations, although the authors by no means offer a consensus. Norman Robinson, focussing on school trustees and the school-district level, provides advice for defining the nature of the "public" and communicating with it. He believes people want to hear and be heard, but are not very interested in direct participation in school governance. Schools and programs studied by R.M. McDonald and Hanne Mawhinney appear to substantiate this view, suggesting that modest steps to involve parents and community members will more than satisfy demands of the public for change. Adrian Guldemond offers a distinctively different perspective, demonstrating that in independent schools, high levels of integration between schools and communities are expected and delivered. The proceedings conclude with Gordon Cressy's persuasive analysis of the current context and how educators must proceed to establish a visionary partnership with those outside the schools so that both can achieve more together.

These proceedings capture but a portion of the presentations at the School and Community Conference; other sessions emphasized participation or particular programs rather than formal papers. A complete list of those who presented at the conference is given in the Appendix.

About the Authors

George Bedard, a doctoral student in educational administration at The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education is currently studying the work of Ontario's Royal Commission on Learning.

James Cibulka, Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee is Director of the Ph.D. program in Urban Education.

Nancy Chavkin is Professor of Social Work at Southwest Texas State University

Gordon Cressy is Executive Director of the Metropolitan Learning Partnership.

Adrian Guldemond is Executive Director of The Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools.

Stephen B. Lawton, Professor, is Chair of the Department of Educational Administration, The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Benjamin Levin is Associate Professor of Educational Administration and Foundations in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba.

Hanne B. Mawhinney is Director of Professional Development Programs at the University of Ottawa.

R.M. McDonald is a Guidance Counsellor at St. Mary's Secondary School in Newfoundland.

Norman Robinson is Professor Emeritus at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia.

Richard G. Townsend is Professor of Educational Administration at The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Policy Options for Building School–Community Relations

James G. Cibulka
University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee

I pose a question: Is the interest in school–community relations (SCR) just another fad? Educators are famous for jumping on one reform bandwagon after another but scarcely has the dust settled from one reform before another comes into vogue to replace it. Certainly in the last 25 years in the area of SCR we have flirted with a variety of reforms – decentralization of school districts, school–community councils, community control, Community Action Programs, model cities neighborhoods and parent coordinators. At the present time there are new thrusts in this direction – coordinated services, private and public school choice, charter schools – and the list goes on. Will these too fade away without making any lasting imprint on schools as we know them?

My guess is that this set of demands will not go away. We are undergoing a fundamental transition.

I will explain what is changing in school–community relations and why this is so; I then turn to some emerging alternatives.

Are the demands for reform in SCR coming primarily from within the educational establishment, or from the outside? For the most part the demands for reform have come from forces in the broader society – parents, business leaders, foundations, our political leadership and other segments of the university rather than from educators. To be sure, some educators have encouraged these changes, but there is still enormous resistance to the idea that anything is wrong or that it is sufficiently broken that it needs fixing. Is this resistance merely pigheadedness? I don't think so. I believe it stems from our tendency to cling to a particular model of schooling which is increasingly dysfunctional.

The model of schooling which has been ascendent for approximately the last century, more or less depending on the details you examine, is the conception of schooling as a professional–technical enterprise. A professional–technical model assumes:

- that teachers and other school personnel are the experts who know more about how to educate children than the parents;
- that educators embody a broader and more balanced view of a child's educational needs than do the parents;

- that in the parents' absence, they delegate responsibility for their children's education to the school and that educators should be empowered to fulfill this responsibility with wide discretion and autonomy, based on professional expertise and judgement; and
- that the school may delegate tasks to the parents, such as assisting in homework and requesting volunteers for the classroom, and that the home's sphere of influence is to carry out the goals and priorities set by school officials.

These assumptions have never been observed completely in all circumstances. Like all belief systems, they have been subject to many constraints. But for roughly the first half of this century the belief system was credible enough to become the legitimating belief system about how schools should operate. Indeed, the assumptions within the technical model were so widely shared and in some respects still are that it was hard to imagine that schooling could be constructed in any other manner.

However, as we know, this way of organizing our schools is only a recent invention. Through most of human history, and in many societies today, schooling is much less formal and enjoys less autonomy from the community and broader society. At one time, most learning took place in the home and was an extension of the family. Even after schooling became more formalized, it was for much of the 19th century closely tied to the local community, its economy and most importantly to its values. Consolidation of rural schools was one effort to professionalize their organization and to break the tight link between local communities and the control of schooling. In cities, the municipal reform movement sought to weaken the ties between individual schools and their neighborhoods, particularly in working-class, ethnic areas of these cities. In both kinds of communities, then, the technical model eventually gained ascendancy as a symbol of improved learning opportunities.

This professional–technical model reached the zenith of its credibility somewhere after the end of World War II, approximately 50 years ago. It has been on the decline ever since, losing legitimacy with precipitous speed in the last decade.

There are still places where the technical model of schooling is credible. One can find neighborhoods and communities where enough of the past survives that the model seems quite workable, even if it shows strains and signs of wear. Small rural school districts represent one example, as do suburban areas. But even in those places many people are questioning whether this is the best approach, since it is almost impossible to wall off the broader forces of change in our North American societies which are undercutting this traditional model of school–community relations.

What are these forces of change?

First, most of us would hasten to mention the decline of families. The causes of this decline are multiple and they are too complex to discuss in this paper. Suffice it to say that the technical model of schooling presumes, indeed requires, a preponderance of stable, well-adjusted, supportive families to work effectively. Once this stable backdrop disappears, as it has today, some other way must be found to replace or compensate for the support once rendered by the home in a natural, spontaneous way, with virtually no effort by the school.

A second foundation upon which the model depended was a more or less functional community surrounding the school. When the environment surrounding the school is violent, it intrudes upon the learning process within the school. Where there are no longer businesses to hire graduates, it intrudes upon the motivation students bring to school. Where there are no longer religious institutions in the community, the moral foundation of community life has been lost and this, too, makes its way indirectly into the school. When we speak of dysfunctional communities we tend to think of inner-city neighborhoods of cities, but it is also the case that the decline of local neighborhoods and intact communities is nearly universal, reaching into virtually all kinds of communities. Ironically, the technical model of schooling never embraced local communities, even when they were more fully functional earlier in this century. The technical model has always had an uneasy truce with the idea of community. Community leaders and their values, including their political pressures, might well challenge the autonomy and judgement of school officials. Indeed, the doctrine of community control of schools in many ways has been in tension with the ideal of professional control. Nonetheless, the two coexisted more or less harmoniously for many decades for a reason educators rarely acknowledged. Like it or not, public schools depend on the sustenance which local communities provide. They cannot function effectively without the direct and indirect supports of that local community.

Not the least of the challenges to this community base of support is the growth of information technology through television, records, CDs and computers, all of which render much of what happens in local neighborhoods and communities provincial, or seemingly so. When local communities began to disappear as cohesive functional units and gave way to functionally differentiated urban megalopolises, when they began to be eclipsed by the learning or lack of learning which takes place through television and other electronic media, this was a severe blow for the technical model of schooling. The very forces of industrialization which made technical schooling possible and even necessary created the internal dynamics which at the present time have conspired to undercut that model of schooling.

Once educators could no longer take the community for granted, they could no longer stand apart from it in splendid isolation. They would have to reconstruct and reconnect what communities once provided for schools in a natural way: the moral, cultural, economic and political support – in other words, the entire ecology upon which schools depend to connect their pupils and their learning to a social context. None of those external props can be taken for granted any longer; schools have the unenviable task of recreating that community or finding a functional substitute for it.

There is a third factor which has led to the declining legitimacy of the professional–technical model of schooling: the growing evidence that schools are no longer succeeding. Whether they are in fact doing better or worse than in the past has been debated hotly and, as usual, the answer lies in the perspective which you care to take. What is critical, however, is that the public, broadly speaking, increasingly questions the effectiveness of the public schools. Once this debate entered the mainstream of public life – when it became a subject for television specials, newspaper editorials and cocktail party discussions – the technical model lost its power. For any professional group such as doctors, lawyers, architects or engineers, legitimacy depends on the assumption of expertise. When that expertise comes to be debated and the public claims to know as much as educators, we are in a new era where professional autonomy will no longer suffice as a method of governing schools. The challenge which this questioning of the effectiveness of our schools poses goes beyond the kinds of questioning which school boards once posed for school officials. School boards were, and are, only a minor threat to professional values; for the most part they have supported the idea of professional control, except for highly publicized and unusual circumstances such as community disputes or disputes with teachers' unions. Today the authority of schools has been undercut by the wider societal debates about school effectiveness, debates in which school boards are themselves often on the defensive. As a practical matter, educators can no longer simply say: "Leave us alone. We are the experts who know what is best. Trust us." Such claims worked effectively for decades, but they ring hollow and today border on laughable satire. Clearly, much has changed in the last quarter-century.

I cite one further bit of evidence that the professional-technical model of schooling is in trouble: the widespread yearning for a return to community. It pervades the social criticism and commentaries of intellectuals. In the United States, it became an important theme of President Clinton's State of the Union address in January 1994, and is now being championed by the Secretary of Education, Richard Riley, who is calling for more responsibility toward our children. It is a call which cuts across political ideology and partisan political leadership. Of course, given the broad base of support for a return to responsibility and community, the impulse lacks any clear direction. But if people cannot state clearly what sort of society they can envision as an alternative to the one we have created, they can often unite in describing the problems and evils of the society we have created. This sense of dissatisfaction with large institutions, with the excesses of greed in the 1980s and the return to religion are signals that people are searching for a new source of community which binds and bonds. Here again, schools are caught within this larger vortex of change. People look to them, sometimes unrealistically perhaps, as a force for renewing a social bond.

All of this is to say, then, that as powerful as the professional-technical model has been in our century, its limits have been severely challenged by the four social changes I have just described – the decline of families, the erosion of functionally cohesive communities, the questioning of how effectively schools are run by professional experts and the revulsion against features of modern society which it assumed might be cured with some return to community.

We are in an interesting period, since no alternative to the professional-technical model has emerged, at least no alternative which has been announced in neon lights. Instead, there are a number of parallel, sometimes competing alternatives which embody some attempt to restore community to the process of schooling. Some are largely nostalgic, others genuinely new.

I turn now to a discussion of six of these alternatives, speaking to their respective strengths and weaknesses: community schools, community-based organizations, choice, charter schools, workplace schools and coordinated services

Community Schools

Many community schools were created as alternatives in the 1960s. What is notable about them is that so many disappeared. Like many utopian efforts of the New Left, and those throughout history, such schools rarely survive the first generation of leadership. They struggle with identities, funding, a stable fiscal base, etc.

Two current versions of community schools are: (1) Dr. James Comer's New Haven Schools Project which is working with poor parents at two elementary schools in New Haven, Connecticut and (2) the decentralization experiment with local school councils in Chicago. A comparison of these two indicates how differently community schools can be structured. Dr. Comer is a psychiatrist affiliated with Yale University, so his model draws heavily on a psychosocial perspective; there is consensual, shared decision-making among parents and staff. In Chicago, by contrast, the model is explicitly political giving community persons a majority of the seats and sharply limiting the role of teachers on the local school councils. The two experiments embody two different conceptions of community – one framed around shared goals and a common organizational culture, the other around political participation. The scale of change attempted is very different – in Chicago it involved approximately 500 schools while in New Haven only two schools are involved.

These two alternative approaches raise an important question about the empowerment dimensions of community. What does it take to enlist the support of disenfranchised parents, particularly those with little history of successful engagement of schools, beginning with their own experiences as students, and how does this translate to improved learning opportunities for children? Is it possible to change a whole school system at once, or must one concentrate on individual schools and provide enormous resource support, as Comer has done? Further, can change occur largely through rearranging governance and holding principals accountable? It must be said that there is no clear evidence from either of these projects. Comer can point to improved achievement scores, although to my knowledge detailed data have not been released. Comer also can point to changes in teachers' behavior, evidence which is largely absent in Chicago. After several years of experimentation, Chicago teachers report improved morale but few see any need to change what they are doing. Moreover, the engagement of parents below the level of the local school council, with some exceptions, does not seem to be a major accomplishment of the reform.

When the Chicago reform was first announced in 1989, its supporters were quick to distinguish it from an earlier generation of community control experiments in New York, Detroit, and elsewhere. The contrast essentially was that this would achieve change at the school level by making principals accountable. But there may be a major flaw which all these political approaches to recreating community share, which is a very limited idea of power. Power is the ability to act effectively to influence your environment. In the case of schools, this requires the cooperation of all the stakeholders – teachers, administrators, parents, students, even others in the community. This requires building self-confidence and trust and erasing differences based on status. It takes time and energy and it must be reinvented as teachers, parents and students change. That is why Comer's model has more promise than Chicago's political reforms.

This idea of cooperation as an essential element in rebuilding school–community ties has come up again and again in the contributions to the book on building school–community and family ties (*Coordination Among Schools, Families, and Communities: Prospects for Educational Reform*, forthcoming). One such effort is described by Dick Corbett and his associates at Research for Better Schools in Philadelphia. At one elementary school in a poor section of the city, they have been working with teachers and parents to develop a common vision of what they want their students to be – not what the curriculum should look like, or what programs should be in place, or how the school should be decorated, or the things that usually are discussed. Corbett and his colleagues were convinced that what can bridge the gap between the world of school and the world of the families is a dialogue about what they hope the children will become. They found, and I find this quite fascinating, that there were as many differences among teachers and others working in the school as there were among parents and those in the community. Corbett and his colleagues wish to create a consensus and then turn the discussion to what teachers and parents, as well as community members, can do to realize that vision. Is this possible? The evidence is not all in on this experiment, but who can deny that one of our problems is a lack of a clear vision on what kind of persons we hope our children will become? Perhaps this is the starting point for creating an ethos which supports improved learning opportunities for children.

Another example of a community-based effort which will be included in our book and which offers a somewhat different approach is reported by Paul Heckman and his colleagues at the University of Arizona. For some years they have been actively involved in the Educational and Community Change Project, seeking to redevelop one of the poorest areas of a Southwestern city, occupying a one square mile area, within which there are two elementary schools. One aspect of the project is a community–school coalition to link schools, families and community agencies serving children. The coalition has included both individuals from within the neighborhood and influential community, civic and business leaders from outside. This coalition has been able to win political support for a wellness center by combining pressure from power brokers and from local residents in the target area, although its political success is still uncertain. This particular approach takes us back to political strategies associated with community and school linkages. There are, of course, dangers in this political coalition-building approach, not dissimilar to the local politics in Chicago mentioned earlier; the schools can be embroiled in larger political agendas. However, if these are channeled and managed properly, schools have much to gain in the way of additional resources and support from becoming part of a community-based coalition.

Community-based Organizations

I turn now to a second, quite different vision of school–community engagement offered by Shirley Brice Heath and Milbrey McLaughlin, professors at Stanford University, who have studied inner-city youth organizations in many U.S. cities. These organizations provide recreation, musical performances and a host of activities before and after school and on weekends. Many operate on a shoestring and most lack the trappings of a formal organization. They are products of the dedicated efforts of people who live directly in the community. Heath and McLaughlin (*Coordination Among Schools, Families, and Communities: Prospects for Educational Reform,* forthcoming) describe one such program in the performing arts where youth work together on a play performance. These same youth are listless and unmotivated in school, but here they are exuberant and are committed to perfection. How can this be so? These inner-city youth organizations clearly touch an aspect of the lives of these youth which schools have not. Teachers know little of the community in which these youth live and see largely negative images of the youth's families and community life. Heath and McLaughlin argue for some better engagement between the school and the work of these youth organizations, where so much informal learning takes place in settings which somehow seem authentic to the youth. At present, schools and these voluntary community efforts inhabit separate worlds.

Their study has implications which extend far beyond inner-city neighborhoods. We need to ask ourselves, as educators, whether we have fully tapped the many activities in our communities which have educational potential, whether it is sports, musical activities or business ventures. Because schools do not create or control these other spheres of communal life, it is sometimes assumed that they are beyond the school's reach and outside its mission. But these activities may be ways of engaging parents and the broader community in support of the school's goals. Students spend an enormous amount of time outside school, and we need to tap the educative potential of that life outside school. This will mean a different way of organizing schools and defining valid educational experiences.

Choice

A third strategy for building school–community relations is the subject of school choice, which is what many believe to be the direction in which we should be headed. The core concept in this reform strategy is that schools should give families the right to choose a school. From this, the theory goes, a number of benefits will flow – stronger commitment by the parents, more responsiveness by school officials, a clearer school mission and programming. There are different versions of choice – open enrollment, magnet or specialty schools and private school choice being three major approaches.

The evidence on whether schools of choice have better achievement is ambiguous – to the extent that it is so, it is assumed that this may be because they have a more advantaged clientele. In Milwaukee, Wisconsin, which has a small choice program involving nonsectarian private schools publicly funded (the first such experiment in the U.S.), there is no clear evidence that the schools of choice are producing superior achievement. On the other hand, Estelle James, an economist at the State University of New York-Stony Brook, has done the definitive international research on this topic and found that private schools have an achievement advantage, even in countries where private schools tend to be less prestigious than government-run schools. This is a complex debate, one which will lead nowhere because it cannot be resolved easily, if at all, with data.

Critics point to many problems with choice arrangements – potential and actual – such as differences in parental motivation, differences of information and therefore access to good schools, the danger that schooling will come to be viewed as private rather than part of the larger civic community, etc.

I ask why the public, at least in the U.S., is demanding more choice, even if they do not like some of the plans with which they have been presented in the U.S., such as those in Oregon, Colorado and California, where voters turned down statewide referenda for choice plans. This takes us back to the professional–technical model of schooling as it evolved in the last century, a model which built a system of schools wherein one was required to attend based on place of residence. At that time, people accepted this conscription because they had few choices elsewhere in their lives. With growing affluence and the emergence of information technologies, this poverty of choices in life styles has changed dramatically. Freedom is, according to one definition, the ability to make choices. Accordingly, a policy of conscription which forces families to attend one school based on their residence is increasingly *out of sync* with the choices most people now can make in the rest of their lives. Even if they do not intend to exercise it, they would like the ability to make the choice. For this reason alone, the demand for choice will not go away.

In exchange for that ability to make a choice, schools gain some degree of freedom. They can insist upon certain standards for admitting and retaining a student in a school. Some of the most successful schools I have seen enter into contractual relationships with parents specifying the obligations of the home and the school and how they are to be partners. In one Chicago Catholic school which served students who had been unsuccessful at another school, the student had to sign a contract. The contract stated explicitly what disciplinary procedures would be brought against the student for failure to meet the terms of the contract, including expulsion. For many students, this was an effective attention getter. The school had other features which helped to make it a success with these pupils, such as a very caring staff, but there is no question that the ability to make a choice was a feature that helped both the student and the school.

Charter Schools

The concept of charter schools is an idea which speaks to one of the potential shortcomings of schools of choice, namely that they will not generate innovative schools without some additional push. Public schools of choice still operate under rules and policies set by the state, department of education or provincial ministry and private schools, responding strictly to market forces, may not be all that innovative. So the concept is that groups of teachers and, possibly parents and entrepreneurs, would be able to build their own school free of most of these regulations. Charter school legislation has been passed in a handful of states and is under consideration in a large number. It is too early to tell how successful the reform will be. If we can get beyond the political opposition to it, it has real potential, mainly as a incubator for new ideas that might be adopted by schools which are governed more conventionally. The political opposition comes from teachers' unions which fear hiring of uncertified staff and loss of collective bargaining rights, including salary levels. In some places, such as in Wisconsin, unions insisted that charter schools not include the ability to contract out to private for-profit firms. Only a limited number of such schools are authorized by the states. If these schools can teach us something about how to build school communities more effectively, to raise achievement, or simply to be more efficient in our allocation of education dollars, then it is an experiment worth making. Perhaps the most exciting aspect of charter schools is that they provide the opportunity to start fresh and to bring together the creative energies of a group of teachers and parents who have a shared vision.

Workplace Schools

James Coleman, a sociologist, has advocated a school-community integration strategy of schools being located in places of work. This approach has an advantage in that a cooperative employer could permit parents to spend time in the school as volunteers assisting their children or more broadly participating in the school. Such an approach solves daycare problems as well, if the school has extended hours. It also gives employers and parents an incentive to share in the responsibility of educating youngsters. There are corresponding dangers and disadvantages, of course. Employers might exercise undue influence over the curriculum and other aspects of school operations, substituting their own vision for that of the parents (most workplaces are not that democratic, rhetoric aside). The student body might be segregated by race, class or even ethnicity, depending on the business. Still, the idea is worth experimentation. There are still very few such schools in the U.S., and they are very new. Although they would be unlikely to provide the entire answer, they need to be studied.

Coordinated Services

The issue of coordinated services for children is another example of a new approach to linking schools with their communities. This is sometimes held out as a panacea, and of course it is not. But unlike many of the alternatives to the technical model, it does begin from a recognition that schools, families and communities are interdependent and that for children to be educated effectively, all their needs must be met by a variety of human resources.

There is no one model of coordinated services. Sometimes services are located in a school, which has an advantage for the families (one stop shopping) and for the teachers (ready access to other professionals who can help a student with noneducational needs, medical, nutritional or psychological, which may interfere with learning).

However, merely locating a service center in a school will not automatically make parents and teachers use the service. This is exemplified by some early findings from the experiment in Kentucky, which in redesigning its educational system created Family Resource Centers located within schools or near schools where at least 20% of the students are eligible for free school meals. The Family Resource Centers include:

- full-time child care for 2- and 3-year-olds;
- after-school child care for 4-12-year-old children;
- health and education services for new and expectant parents;
- education to enhance parenting skills;
- support and training for child daycare providers; and
- health services or referrals.

Centers are staffed by a Center Coordinator with the assistance of an advisory council composed of parents, school staff, community members and local service providers.

One early finding from the research of Claire Smrekar at Vanderbilt University is that the centers are underutilized by both parents and school staff. Locating centers in the school improves access for teachers, making it more convenient than when the center is in a separate building. However, locating the center in the school reduces utilization by parents, many of whom have had bad experiences with the school in the past. Of course these barriers may well be overcome, but they remind us that setting up structures to respond to complicated problems does not eliminate the psychological and social barriers which have historically separated schools and communities, particularly in poor areas.

Robert Crowson and William Boyd remind us that there is a long history of trying to get schools to collaborate with other agencies and organizations, and the record is not a happy one. Many of the reforms promoted by progressive reformers early in the century, such as the lighted schoolhouse effort, enjoyed only the most modest success, and public health nurses were turned into school nurses with a much narrower set of responsibilities than reformers had envisioned. There are powerful barriers to collaboration which are rooted in the interests of school systems, and the different training of professionals serving children. Furthermore, the problems of cooperating across different institutional boundaries are enormous. Public schools have a tendency to try to control everything within their reach, because of their commitment to the technical model of schooling we discussed earlier, and the concept of autonomy which has been part of that model. If they cannot fully control their activities, they tend to marginalize programs so they pose no threat to the on-going activities of the school, as has occurred in The Nation of Tomorrow school-community cooperative venture studied by Mark Smylie and Robert Crowson in Chicago. They point to the fact that university personnel approached the project with flexible time schedules, a change philosophy, respect for worklife autonomy and "a general preference for non-directive and non-hierarchical styles of intervention." The school partners saw the project as a way of addressing their severe resource needs, were less flexible in their schedules, focused mainly on classrooms, and favored an "administrator-directive style of management." Principals saw the project as an add-on to the continuing work of the school. These differences sharply limited the changes which Crowson and Smylie report as emerging from the project as it has evolved so far.

In their study of five coordinated services projects in U.S. cities, Crowson and Boyd found that no project had achieved fully collaborative status. This requires a shared sense of the problem and shared goals, common institutional interests and merged reward structures. It requires adjustments in the environmental relationships of the cooperating agencies so that they share funding, support, etc. It requires some blended or shared means of getting the job done or sharing of the informal aspects of organizational life. In other words, collaboration requires many mutual adjustments and for that reason often fails. But Crowson and Boyd raise the question whether it is possible to cooperate successfully without achieving collaboration. The problem is that we know of some successful cases, but we are not sure why they are successful.

Over the long run it is not clear that the organizational costs of interagency cooperation can be sustained. It may be easier to minimize these costs of transaction by locating all the services within one agency. This is a frightening prospect for schools, many of whom have been controlled and funded separately. But if the costs of coordinating services prove to be too great, the response may be to relocate them in one super agency. Steps in that direction have already occurred in some states in the U.S., such as Minnesota, which has a cabinet level agency responsible for coordinating all children's services.

There are dangers associated with the efforts toward coordinated services. This reform might well only reinforce and strengthen the power which professionals have over the average parent, particularly one with little education and few resources to challenge these professionals. Most of the coordinated services movement is driven, it would seem, *by* a professional vision of services provided to and for clients, but not *with* them.

Another ambiguity in the coordinated services movement is whether it will reduce funding inequities currently in place. This is an enormous problem in the U.S. where lawsuits are underway or threatened in a majority of states to challenge state systems of funding public schools. If coordinated services ends up being just a patch on an already threadbare system, it is unlikely to reform school-community relations for the schools which need the help most. The system for funding children's services needs to be redesigned with a comprehensive picture in mind.

Many of these problems reflect the disorganization inherent in the U.S. federal system of government, a problem not altogether absent in Canada. According to one U.S. analysis, at the federal level alone we have 76 major education programs, supervised by 19 Congressional committees and 33 subcommittees, located in 10 executive branch departments and 25 assistant-secretary level agencies. There are nearly 90 separate federal entities responsible for children and their families. This maze is duplicated as one moves down through several levels of government to the school level. It is a problem not easily solved. It reflects division of powers. Equally important, though, it reflects a piecemeal approach to social welfare and education policy. Progress is needed in this area, and not all coordination needs to start at the bottom.

I do not want to appear to be too negative. One of the success stories, reported in a special issue on "Connecting Schools, Families, and Communities" in *Educational Administration Quarterly* (Summer, 1994), is a program for at-risk youth in a high school in Toronto, as studied by Hanne Mawhinney. There are successful cases emerging.

If coordinated services are to be successful they will have to address several formidable obstacles:

1. they must solve the problem of competing organizational turfs and identities;
2. they must strengthen the role of laypersons so that professionals and laypersons have an important role in planning, implementing and evaluating services; and
3. they must strive for a more comprehensive and efficient system to replace the patchwork, inequitable system of child welfare and social welfare now in place.

This last problem may be a particularly American phenomenon, but the other two problems – turf battles and professional control – seem to be universal.

Summary and Conclusion

We are in a transition period when the old technical model of schooling has lost much of its credibility and effectiveness because it has been undercut by important changes in our society – the decline of family solidarity, the loss of cohesive neighborhoods and communities, the declining monopoly of schools on information-transmission, the yearning for more community in advanced post-industrial societies, the availability of greater choice in other spheres of personal life. All of these factors, many of which have their origins outside the process of schooling, have eroded public faith in schools as they now exist.

We are in the uncomfortable stage where no new models of schooling have emerged to challenge this technical model. We are unlikely to dismantle schools altogether, although there is one radical response from home schoolers which would have us do so. (In the U.S. incidentally, their numbers are growing.) We will have to invent new ways of relating schools to their communities along the lines of community schools, youth organizations perhaps linked to schools, schools of choice, charter schools, workplace schools and coordinated or integrated services to children.

The school-to-work transition is another whole piece of the school–community linkage which is being rethought and which must be part of solving this puzzle. In general, despite their different points of departure and structural differences, all these approaches to school–community relations share a more ecological approach to schooling than the old technical model, a model in which schools interact more openly and freely with their communities, draw on their strengths, and try to share in overcoming their weaknesses. This may be asking too much of schools. I am concerned that they are at a breaking point now with the range of expectations thrust upon them. But perhaps a more ecological model may, quite ironically, relieve the heavy burden presently placed on schools by an unrealistic public. An ecological model would clarify just what schools can and cannot do and what other resources must be brought to bear to educate and raise children effectively to an increasingly uncertain future.

There can be no question but that this has enormous implications for rethinking the roles of school administrators and teachers. It thrusts the principal, for example, into a more public role where communication with publics and coordination of programs becomes one of the most important responsibilities. If principals are doing these things, who will manage the building? Perhaps teachers and even parents will play a greater role. We have only begun to explore the implications of changing conceptions of leadership growing out of a reform of school–community relations.

We have seen many changes come and go. Will the current interest in community also be a passing fad? I have offered my answer. We are, to borrow from the title of a book, *In a Dance with Community,* and it is likely to fundamentally reshape schools as we know them today. Since the past cannot be preserved, much less reclaimed, we shall have to invent new schools and new institutions to build a workable future for our children. There is no more important challenge facing our societies.

Note

Quotes and citations in this paper are taken from the chapters in the forthcoming book, *Coordination Among Schools, Families, and Communities: Prospects for Educational Reform,* Cibulka, J. and Kritek, W. (Eds.), SUNY: Albany Press.

Families and Schools Working Together in a Pluralistic Society

Nancy F. Chavkin
Richter Institute of Social Work
Southwest Texas State University

> *It lies within our reach, before the end of the twentieth century, to change the futures of disadvantaged children. The children who today are at risk of growing into unskilled, uneducated adults, unable to help their own children to realize the American dream, can, instead, become productive participants in a twenty-first-century America whose aspirations they will share. The cycle of disadvantage that has appeared so intractable can be broken.* (Schorr, 1988, p. 291)

Within Our Reach, by Lisbeth Schorr provides compelling evidence that we already have the requisite resources and skills to determine the course of the future. This paper examines part of Lisbeth Schorr's challenge to us – creating meaningful partnerships among families, schools and communities.

Although we know *why* we need partnerships, *how* do we create a meaningful partnership in our pluralistic and complex world? In this paper I: (1) develop an understanding of the history and research that has already been done on partnerships and family–community involvement in education, (2) illustrate an example of a successful partnership I worked with and (3) provide guidelines for developing your own partnership in your own community.

Educators and policymakers are in agreement on the need to reduce the high levels of academic and social failure among children in our schools. They jointly and publicly acknowledge that these high rates of failure amount to a major crisis – a social, economic and political peril.

We, as school personnel, educators or social workers, cannot solve this problem alone. Nor can families or communities solve these problems. The good news is – together we can make a difference, as evident in *Together We Can: A Guide for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services* (Melaville & Blank, 1993), a book resulting from a joint project of the United States Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services. It is written with the idea that together we can solve the educational and social problems that have risen to such crisis proportions. Schools and families need each other and together they need other community resources and supports. What we are talking about are new forms of family, school and community partnerships that can and do work.

Don Davies and Joyce Epstein, who co-direct the Center on Families, Schools, Communities and Children's Learning, (1993, p. 205), write: "The interests of a child will be better served when there are good connections in all of the parts of the ecosystem." The world today is a complex social system – what happens in one part affects the other parts. To build effective family, school and community partnerships, we must have an ecological view and a clear vision of what our goal is. We must go beyond the recognition that children grow up in a web of institutions including the family, neighborhood, church, the health and social agencies that serve children, local government and private employers and move toward involving all of these institutions in the partnership for a better tomorrow.

Partnerships

Background Research. Partnerships in education are not new. A 1989 survey report indicated that there were more than 141,000 education partnerships ranging from individuals to large multinational corporations. The 1990's have brought an unprecedented increase in this spirit of collaboration. The National Association of State Boards of Education, the National Governors' Association, the National Alliance of Business, the Urban Superintendents' Network, the American Association for Higher Education and the College Board have all endorsed the idea of formal relationships among schools, service providers, communities and families.

The research about family involvement in education is not new and, in fact, the research has been incontrovertible: increased family involvement in education increases student achievement. Research by Bloom (1985), Bronfenbrenner (1974, 1979), Clark (1983), Dornbusch and Ritter (1988), Henderson (1987) and Kagan (1985) leaves little doubt that family involvement in education is directly related to significant increases in student achievement.

University of Illinois researcher Herbert Walberg (1984) reviewed 29 controlled studies on school–parent programs and found that family participation in education was twice as predictive of academic learning as was family socioeconomic status. Walberg also found that some parent involvement programs had effects ten times as large as socioeconomic status and benefitted both older and younger students.

There are other important benefits of family participation in the schools. Rich (1985) and Sattes (1985) found that family involvement in education helped produce increases in student attendance, decreases in the drop-out rate, positive parent–child communication, improvement of student attitudes and behavior and more parent–community support of the school. Swap (1987) discussed the benefits that both families and teachers reap from collaboration. She reported that collaboration broadens both families' and educators' perspectives and brings additional resources to both groups. Nardine (1990) discussed the reciprocal benefits for parents who are involved in their children's education. He cited specific examples of the mutually reinforcing effect that parents and children have on each other's educational outcomes and suggested that it is an asset to involve low-income minority parents in the educational process.

Research has demonstrated that children benefit from family involvement in education but minority children and children from low-income homes have the most to gain (Henderson, 1987). A study by Catherine Snow and her colleagues at Harvard (1991) examined both home and school factors influencing the literacy development of low-income children and found that it was a complex set of interactions between the two that influenced literacy development. Their study challenges assumptions that low-income parents do not care about their children's education.

Educators also support parent involvement in education. Williams and Chavkin (1985) found that more than 90% of the 3,498 teachers, principals, superintendents, school board presidents and state education agency officials that they surveyed in the southwestern U.S. were interested in parents performing roles of school program supporter, home tutor and audience. More than 95% of the teachers and 99% of the principals believed that it was the teacher's responsibility to give parents ideas about helping their children with school. In addition to establishing that teachers and principals solidly support parent involvement in education, Williams and Chavkin (1985) found that 99% of all parents in their survey (n = 3,103) supported the idea.

Philip Ritter, Randy Mont-Reynaud and Sanford Dornbusch (1993) examine the assumption that minority parents of high school students, especially of the lower class, are not concerned with their children's education. Their multi-ethnic sample includes 7,836 adolescents and a subsample of 2,955 parents. Using control variables of ethnicity, socio-economic status and school performance the study analyzes measures of parent attitudes and involvement – parents' emphasis on working hard in school, reactions to grades, involvement, participation in programs for parents and attendance at the children's school activities. The results clearly refute the stereotype that minority parents are not concerned with their children's education and also point out some important differences among minority groups.

The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher (Harris, 1987) found that inner-city parents' desire to communicate with their children's teachers was even greater than that of wealthier suburban parents. In her report on Hispanic dropouts in the Dallas Independent School District, Robledo (1989) found that there were no differences in parents' desires for more parent meetings and school programs between the parents of children who had left school and those parents whose children had remained in school; parents wanted to be involved in their children's education. These studies indicate both majority and minority parents are concerned with their children's education.

Because of the history of parent involvement and the fact that teachers, parents and school administrators all agree on the importance of parent involvement in education, it seems logical that increased parent involvement should take place now, but these home–school relationships are often filled with conflict (Lightfoot, 1978). The link between home and school that has been standard procedure for white, middle-class families has not been evident for all children.

Lareau (1989) examines the issue of social class as it relates to family involvement and partnerships in education. She challenges the position that social class is of only indirect significance in children's schooling. Citing examples of parent attendance at parent–teacher conferences she states that social class is the key factor in family involvement: middle-class parents attend parent-teacher conferences in much higher numbers than do lower-class parents. Middle-class parents, however, take a more active role than working-class and lower-class parents in many areas of schooling such as reading, volunteering, field trips and summer programs.

Despite Lareau's work, the reason for the infrequency of minority parent involvement is not as clear as income level. According to James Comer (1986), minority parents' lack of participation in traditional parent–school activities should not be misinterpreted as a lack of interest in their children's education. He points out that many minority parents do not participate in traditional parent–school activities such as PTA meetings because they feel uncomfortable at the school. Comer's work with the New Haven, Connecticut schools reveals that minority parents often lack knowledge about school protocol, have had past negative experiences with schools and feel unwelcome at a middle-class institution. Because of racial, income and educational differences parents are reluctant to become involved in the schools.

Comer suggests that just inviting parents to school is not enough; parents need clear mechanisms for involvement and programs must be restructured to attract parents who have been reluctant to involve themselves in the school. Comer (1988, p. 42) concludes: "Schools must win the support of parents and learn to respond flexibly and creatively to students' needs."

Susan Dauber and Joyce Epstein (1993), from Johns Hopkins University, used data from 2,317 inner-city parents in Baltimore, Maryland to examine how parents in economically disadvantaged communities say they are involved, or want to be involved, in their children's education. They found that parents' level of involvement is directly linked to the specific educator practices that encourage involvement at school and that guide parents in how to help at home. In determining whether or not inner-city parents stay involved with their children's education through the middle grades, school practices that inform and involve parents were more important than parent education, family size, marital status and grade level.

These effective school practices center on schools reaching out to diverse groups of families. Esther Lee Yao (1993) discusses the diversity within Asian immigrant families and concurs with the central importance of the school reaching out to these parents. Through the use of poignant examples, she argues for a clear understanding of the many cultures of Asian-Americans; she describes barriers to communication and provides specific strategies for working with Asian immigrant families.

Based upon her extensive work developing a parent education curriculum for American Indian families, Dolores Bigfoot Sipes (1993) provides useful information for educators to involve these families in their children's education. She explains how traditional customs of American Indians such as honoring children, the medicine wheel, storytelling, talking circle, principle of proper living and vision quest relate to working with the American Indian family. Focusing on cultural and ethical issues, she presents an insider's view on understanding American Indian families.

Focusing on school-age, limited English proficient (LEP) students, Andrea Bermudez (1993) discusses the inadequacies of services to families. After reviewing the rationale for parent involvement in the education of the LEP students, she examines the barriers which exist between homes and schools and offers suggestions to secure and strengthen the home–school partnership. To promote parent involvement, she suggests training programs, such as the one at the University of Houston-Clear Lake, for both minority and majority teachers. She also provides a sample of a family literacy program which includes topics on English for survival and on general parent education programs.

Don Davies (1993) utilizes a cross-cultural approach to develop recommendations for parent involvement programs with low-income minority students. Based on his work with colleagues in Portugal, England and the U.S. he analyzes the results of in-depth interviews with low-income parents. These interviews provide rich data about the link between poverty and social and academic failure in the schools. Davies has used these findings in the Schools Reaching Out Project, a parent involvement project that is a model of a research-based intervention with minority parents based in Boston and New York.

David Seeley (1993) uses case examples from two poverty affected, largely minority, schools in California who chose to participate in the Accelerated Schools Project, to argue for a new paradigm for parent involvement. Seeley, in *Education Through Partnership* (1981), espouses a fundamental shift away from the delegation model in public education. He suggests that basic structures, roles, relationship, attitudes and assumptions must be changed if parent involvement is going to be successful. He provides examples of schools where these changes are being implemented and contends that the shift to a collaborative model will empower all the players and will thus produce higher levels of academic achievement.

Dorothy Rich (1993) analyzes current practices of minority parent involvement and sees the lack of an infrastructure as the major shortcoming in parent involvement efforts. Rich begins with the conviction that we must unite the forces of home, school and community. Believing that education is a community responsibility, not just the function of the school, she describes what is necessary to build effective home–school partnerships. Her partnership for excellence is based on a three-part design: (1) set the stage with an information campaign on the importance of parents as educators, (2) establish a parent education delivery system, and (3) provide learning activities that families and others can use with children. Rich sees the school as the chief facilitator in this process and offers specific suggestions to educators on how to build an infra-structure.

Diane Scott-Jones (1993) discusses the major problems in past research efforts with minority families. She examines the relationships among race, socioeconomic status, family structure and parent involvement in education. Scott-Jones also looks at how parent involvement changes during the course of the child's and parents' lives. Emphasizing the need for more culturally relevant family process variables, she reviews the literature, presents many useful criticisms of the field and offers cogent suggestions to researchers which will aid efforts to better understand minority parents. Using Ogbu's (1981) work, she calls for researchers and practitioners to look at families from a cultural-ecological perspective. According to Ogbu, the rearing strategies of racial and ethnic minority parents must be examined in the appropriate cultural context. Parents' belief systems and theories of success undergird their interactions with their children. Ogbu's cultural–ecological model requires attention to the adult roles and cultural tasks of various groups; minority children and their families should not be inappropriately compared with majority groups.

All of these researchers and practitioners are saying the same thing: the solution to educational problems in our pluralistic society requires collaboration among a wide range of community entities with families and schools as the central partners in the process of education. Our continuing challenge is to understand and work with families in their diversity and complexity. Community organizations, businesses, health care institutions and social service agencies are all important in the educational process and a positive relationship between parents and schools is essential. The time is now for partnerships and quality family involvement.

Partnerships in Action. The partnership depicted in the video, *PATH Mathematics*, is an interdisciplinary partnership with a clear purpose and a comprehensive research base; it is not a partnership just for the sake of goodwill and nice feelings. This partnership produced clear results in the areas of increased academic achievement and higher aspirations.

As described in the video, *PATH Mathematics* is a partnership funded by the U.S. Department of Education to conduct research in mathematics teaching and learning, and in social services. Paul Kennedy, my co-director, and I are investigating ways to provide access to algebra and geometry for 8th and 9th grade students who have been tracked out of algebra. The goal of PATH Mathematics is to form a partnership among Southwest Texas State University (SWT), San Marcos School District (SMCISD), Century Telephone (formerly San Marcos Telephone Company), and the community (families, social agencies, professional associations) to significantly improve the mathematical skills of off-track students. In this way, PATH Mathematics will increase students' readiness for higher education.

Objectives of the partnership focus on the whole student; specific objectives are in three areas: curriculum, tutoring and social support. My research is based on the second year of work with 300 students. The partnership approach stems from the social systems perspective of Urie Bronfrenbrenner, James Comer, Lela Costin and other advocates of a comprehensive, integrated approach to education. The project focused on both curricular and social service issues.

PATH Mathematics' curriculum component was designed to give students a comprehensive hands-on pre-algebra course early enough in their secondary education so that they could complete Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II. The curriculum was developed with pilot classes using the latest interactive communications technology that linked the university directly with the high school. The curriculum was intended as an immediate intervention for all off-track 9th graders and subsequently was implemented in off-track 8th grade classes in the second year.

The tutoring component includes a locally broadcast cable television program, *Homework Hotline*, to facilitate the frequency of tutoring sessions conducted by SWT students. In addition, PATH students have regular tutorials in the classroom. These students are able to get additional hands-on experience with the lessons from the regular class and have the opportunity to interact with college students who are majoring or minoring in mathematics at SWT. The tutors, who are well-liked by the high school students, provide a personal link with a college-age student.

The social support program is an essential part of PATH Mathematics because it involves the partnership of the school, the community, social services and parents. Few partnerships have a conceptual frame that focuses on the whole student and that integrates curriculum reform and technology with social support services. This joining of forces of diverse sectors of the community helps remove barriers to academic achievement. Many students who have been tracked out of higher-level mathematics courses face serious health, social, economic and motivational problems that prevent them from attending class and completing assignments. No matter how much these students want to succeed, life's problems are overwhelming to them.

The social worker and university interns from the Walter Richter Institute of Social Work collaborate with social service agencies, businesses, parents and SWT to coordinate already existing social services so that they effectively serve the needs of students and their families. The social support program provides a link to appropriate services and helps develop new services to meet the needs of students and their families. The social worker also arranges parent conferences, makes home visits, plans workshops and facilitates parent partnerships with the school district. The social work goal is to empower families to understand and use the resources of the school, the community and the university.

The most important result of the project has been improved academic achievement. An adjusted mean was calculated for the results of an end-of-the-year algebra test based on a pretest score from the math portion of a nationally norm-referenced test, the NAPT. An analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used for these achievement outcome measures so that appropriate posttest comparisons between the three groups could be made after adjusting the posttest means for differences in pretest scores (Table 1).

Table 1. **MathAchievement — ANCOVA**

Group	Adjusted Mean	Unadjusted Mean	N
PATH	25.53	24.85	61
Comparison	17.86	16.91	33
Algebra I	23.44	27.26	19

$F = 13.42 \quad p < .0005$

Other important results were improvements in attendance and aspirations. The number of students missing large numbers of days decreased. The number of students aspiring to go on to higher mathematics was higher for the PATH group (73%) than the comparison group (50%). The number of students reporting that they had high math ability was higher in the PATH group (78%) than in the comparison group (53%).

To summarize, PATH Mathematics is a partnership with a clear goal and a comprehensive evaluation plan. Each partner gives and each partner receives. The San Marcos school district provides the teachers' release time, office equipment and classroom space; the school gains better educated students with higher skills and aspirations for college. San Marcos Telephone Company provides personnel, equipment and transmission costs; the business gains a better educated workforce. Southwest Texas State University provides equipment, faculty-staff release time and office space; the university gains increased recruitment and retention of minority students and training opportunities. The partnership begun by the project directors, one from Social Work and one from Mathematics, is indicative of the kind of university inter-disciplinary commitment necessary to effect meaningful change in education.

Building a Partnership. How can a meaningful family—school—community partnership be created? I will sum it up with one word, *Reframing;* three letters, *V, I,* and P; and a *SLINKY*.

The one word that encompasses key recommendations is *Reframing*. Reframing is the essential ingredient for partnerships to work. We need to rethink our roles in partnerships; we need to take a new look at our roles and be certain that families, communities and agencies are our partners. Often we approach partnerships in a professional, know-it-all way. We begin by treating our families as partners rather than as clients. We ask families for their ideas and do not tell them what it is they need, as the very nature of the word implies judgement. I would suggest that partners divide a piece of paper into three columns: partners would discuss what is okay with the school and the community, what is great and what improvements they envisage. This checklist will show what is currently working and will provide a starting point on which to continue the process.

The three letters in the reframing process are *V, I,* and *P*: *Vision, Involvement* and *Planning* (or Very Important Partnership).

The *Vision* component of building a partnership begins with getting together a group of people from different segments of the community and focusing on commonalities. As exploration of what it is you are about and what it is you wish to change or make better takes place, you build a relationship with one another – you start to trust one another. It does not matter whether the idea of exploring a partnership began at the top or was a bottom-up phenomenon. The focus is on developing the vision and the result should be an overarching goal or several short-term goals.

As the *Vision* component is the beginning of a reframing of our traditional approach to working with families and communities, we as professionals must change the way we approach family–community involvement. We must meet the family and community on their own turf and ask what their goals are rather than telling them what it is they need. Taking stock of the strengths of families and communities is the first step toward the involvement component, the *I* step.

The *Involvement* component of building a partnership focuses on collaboration where the school and community become linked. The emphasis is on diversity with a range of current skills and pervious backgrounds represented. The groups will consist of at least three main groups: consumers, public entities and private entities. Consumers are the families and communities toward whom the target goal is directed. The public are social service agencies, elected officials, media and others in related civic or governmental positions. The private entity comprises businesses and social service agencies. A crucial aspect of involvement is to have all key players involved from the beginning, with the emphasis on teaming and sharing. It is a move from a decision to act to a commitment to act.

The *Planning* component of building a partnership is often the most misunderstood aspect of partnerships. Planning continues with shared collaboration and teaming and moves forward to be a data driven, evaluative stage. It is an ongoing stage that necessitates time and patience. Partnerships tend to allot a short amount of time to planning and to jump right into implementation as everybody wants to see immediate action. Successful partnerships implement programs and activities, evaluate, reflect and then plan revisions of these programs and activities. Ongoing evaluation, constant evaluation, reflection, feedback and new trials of the programs and activities are essential for successful partnerships. Inservice is a major part of the planning component as people need assistance when asked to perform new roles. We have not been taught to work in teams, to share, to relate to other professions. Financial awareness is also important: what can we do with limited resources.

Successful partnerships are like the SLINKY, an old-fashioned wire spiral toy: they loop back before they move forward. There is no direct straight path to a successful partnership – neither the relationships nor the progress are linear. In *Together We Can* there is a diagram of the planning process describing the importance of the SLINKY approach. It is clear that family–community partnerships involve hard work; as no two communities are alike, there is no easy recipe for success. Building successful partnerships will take a reframing of our task and of our professional behaviors.

As Lisbeth Schorr noted, it is within our reach to change the futures of disadvantaged children. This ecological model can be replicated in any community. Together we can significantly improve students' academic achievements and aspirations.

References

Bermudez, A. (1993) Teaming with parents to promote educational equality for language minority students. In Chavkin, N. (Ed.), *Families and Schools in a Pluralistic Society*. Albany, NY: SUNY.

Bloom, B. (1985) *Developing Talent in Young People*. New York: Ballantine Books.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1974) *Is Early Intervention Effective: A Report on Longitudinal Evaluations of Preschool Programs*, Vol. 2. Washington, D.C.: Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979) *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Chavkin, N. (1989) Debunking the myth about minority parents and the school. *Educational Horizons*, 67, 119-123.

Clark, R. (1983) *Family Life and School Achievement: Why Poor Black Children Succeed or Fail*. Chicago: University Press.

Comer, J. (1988) Educating poor minority children. *Scientific American*, 259, 42-48.

Comer, J. (1986) Parent participation in the schools. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 67, 442-446.

Costin, L. (1975) School social work: A new model. *Social Work*, 20, 135-139.

Dauber, S. & Epstein, J. (1993) Parents' attitudes and practices of involvement in inner-city elementary and middle schools. In Chavkin, N. (Ed.), *Families and Schools in a Pluralistic Society*. Albany, NY: SUNY.

Davies, D. (1993) Benefits and barriers to parent involvement: From Portugal to Boston to Liverpool. In Chavkin, N. (Ed.), *Families and Schools in a Pluralistic Society*. Albany, NY: SUNY.

Dornbusch, S. & Ritter, P. (1988) Parents of high school students: A neglected resource. *Educational Horizons*, 66, 75-77.

Harris, L. & Associates, Inc. (1987) *The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher 1987 – Strengthening Links Between Home and School.* New York: Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.

Henderson, A. (Ed.) (1987) *The Evidence Continues to Grow: Parent Involvement Improves Student Achievement.* Columbia, MD: National Committee for Citizens in Education.

Kagan, S. (1985) *Parent Involvement Research: A Field in Search of Itself.* Boston, MA: Institute for Responsive Education.

Lareau, A. (1989) *Home Advantage: Social Class and Parental Involvement in Elementary Education.* London: Falmer Press.

Lightfoot, S. (1978) *Worlds Apart: Relationships Between Families and Schools.* New York: Basic Books.

Melaville, A. & Blank, M. (1993) *Together We Can: A Guide for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services.* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Nardine, F. (1990) The changing role of low-income minority parents in their children's schooling. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education,* 48, 67-80.

Ogbu, J. (1981) Origins of human competence: A cultural-ecological perspective. *Child Development,* 52, 413-429.

Rich, D. (1993) Building the bridge to reach minority parents: Education infrastructure supporting success for all children. In Chavkin, N. (Ed.), *Families and Schools in a Pluralistic Society.* Albany, NY: SUNY.

Rich, D. (1985) *The Forgotten Factor in School Success: The Family.* Washington, D.C.: The Home and School Institute.

Ritter, P., Mont-Reynaud, R. & Dornbusch, S. (1993) Minority parents and their youth: Concern, encouragement, and support for school achievement. In Chavkin, N., Ed., *Families and Schools in a Pluralistic Society.* Albany, NY: SUNY.

Robledo, M. (1989) *The Answer: Valuing Youth in Schools and Families. A Report on Hispanic Dropouts in the Dallas Independent School District.* San Antonio, TX: Intercultural Development Research Association.

Sattes, B. (1985) *Parent Involvement: A Review of the Literature.* Charleston, WV: Appalachia Educational Laboratory.

Schorr, L. (1988) *Within Our Reach: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage.* New York: Doubleday.

Scott-Jones, D. (1993) Families as educators in a pluralistic society. In Chavkin, N. (Ed.), *Families and Schools in a Pluralistic Society.* Albany, NY: SUNY.

Scott-Jones, D. (1988) Families as educators: The transition from informal to formal school learning. *Educational Horizons,* 66, 66-69.

Seeley, D. (1981) *Education Through Partnership.* Cambridge, MA: Ballinger.

Seeley, D. (1993) A new paradigm for parent involvement. In Chavkin, N. (Ed.), *Families and Schools in a Pluralistic Society.* Albany, NY: SUNY.

Sipes, D. (1993) Cultural values and American-Indian families. In Chavkin, N. (Ed.), *Families and Schools in a Pluralistic Society.* Albany, NY: SUNY.

Snow, C., Barnes, W., Chandler, J., Goodman, J., & Hemphill, L. (1991) *Unfulfilled Expectations: Home and School Influences on Literacy.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Swap, S. (1987) *Enhancing Parent Involvement in Schools.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Walberg, H. (1984) Improving the productivity of America's schools. *Educational Leadership,* 41, 19-27.

Williams, D., Jr. & Chavkin, N. (1985) *Final Report of the Parent Involvement in Education Project*. Project number p-2. Grant NIE-400-83-0007. Washington, D.C.: Department of Education.

Yao, E. (1993) Strategies for working effectively with Asian immigrant parents. In Chavkin, N. (Ed.), *Families and Schools in a Pluralistic Society*. Albany, NY: SUNY.

Poverty and Education – Conceptions and Misconceptions

Benjamin Levin
University of Manitoba

Poverty is one of the most important influences on educational attainment in Canada. Although the impact of poverty is widely recognized by educators, schools have not invested significant resources in dealing with poverty effectively. Schools cannot by themselves solve problems of poverty, nor should they be held responsible for poverty. At the same time, a considerable body of research indicates that schools can contribute in important ways to alleviating the impact of poverty. Important strategies for doing so include improved instruction, more preschool education and stronger links with families and communities. To take the necessary steps will require both commitment and imagination.

The Importance of Poverty

Poverty is the enemy of education. Anyone who has worked in an inner-city school, in a school in a poor rural area or in a poor First Nations community can have no doubt that the outgrowths of poverty are inimical to the values of education. Competence, skill, confidence and commitment to the world – what we want from education – are least likely to be found in communities where students and their families are poorest.

In this paper I urge a stronger and more focused educational response to poverty. Schools are not primarily responsible for the existence of poverty, nor can they eliminate it. Other economic and social structures and policies are much more influential in either increasing or diminishing poverty. There is a danger that schools will be blamed for problems that are not of their making, just as there is a danger that schools will blame parents and children. We can usefully focus on what schools can do in regard to poverty even knowing full well that schools are only one part of the struggle for a more humane world.

The deleterious impact of poverty on education has been well known for centuries. More than 100 years ago Dickens described it movingly in many of his novels. In the 1930s James Agee and Walker Evans produced a magnificent and moving portrait of rural poverty in the southern United States in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*.

Thirty years of careful social science have consistently validated what writers have told us. There is overwhelming evidence that socioeconomic status (SES) has been and continues to be the best single predictor of how much schooling students will obtain, how well they will do at their studies and what their life prospects beyond school are.

Although these points seems so well established as to need no further demonstration, I will give further evidence. A review by the Canadian Teachers' Federation cited among the consequences of poverty hunger, inadequate child care, behaviour problems in school, low self-esteem, lower motivation, delayed development, lower achievement, less extra-curricular participation, worse student–teacher interactions, streaming into less challenging programs, lower educational aspirations, interrupted attendance, lower university attendance, illiteracy and increased risk of dropping out (CTF, 1989). A House of Commons Standing Committee came to similar conclusions (Canada, 1991). Offord, Boyle and Jones (1987) found greatly increased rates of hyperactivity, violence and poor school performance among students of families on social assistance. Accidental death and serious illness rates are significantly higher among poor children (Barnhorst & Johnson, 1991, p. 100). "Children from poor neighbourhoods are 40% to 50% more likely than children from rich neighbourhoods to be born too small, too soon, or with growth retardation", while infant mortality rates are almost twice as high (Canada, 1991, pp. 15, 16). Maynes (1993) notes the much lower levels of school achievement in inner-city schools in Edmonton. Olson (1991) points out that children's experience of school often varies dramatically as a consequence of their social class. Radwanski (1987) found a strong connection between family economic status and the likelihood of dropping out of school. Tepperman (1988) reviews evidence connecting almost all life outcomes – educational attainment, occupational status, income and life satisfaction – with family socio-economic status.

These are only Canadian sources! Researchers in the U.S. have produced a much larger body of work, all of which points to the dramatic impact of low income and its associated problems on educational outcomes (Coleman, 1987; McLoyd & Flanagan, 1990; Wilson, 1987).

None of this research says that poverty is fatal to educational success. There are always some children who, despite highly unfavourable life circumstances, manage to succeed. An interesting body of research, reviewed in Reynolds (1993), is developing around the study of these so-called *resilient* children to see if common elements in their situation can be identified that are linked to improved chances of success. It would be a terrible mistake to come to the conclusion that poverty as a child was an irrevocable blow to one's future, since that would mean giving up on efforts to work with poor families and their children.

At the same time, there can be no doubt that poverty puts children at a tremendous disadvantage.

> *Individuals who are poor . . . are confronted with an unremitting succession of negative life events (eviction, physical illness, criminal assault) in the context of chronically stressful, ongoing life conditions such as inadequate housing and dangerous neighbourhoods which, together, markedly increase the exigencies of day-to-day existence.* (McLoyd & Wilson, 1990, pp. 49–50)

Who is Poor in Canada?

Although we speak of *child poverty*, the poverty of children is almost always a product of the poverty of the adults who are looking after them. We might better replace *child poverty* with the term *children living in poor families* because the latter puts the appropriate stress on the family unit rather than only on the child.

Canadian social policy analysts have compiled excellent data on the nature of poverty in Canada. Most of this work is not connected to educational issues, but it does give a clear picture of the extent, nature and demographic correlates of poverty.

The most common poverty indicator in Canada is the low-income cut-off (LICO) used by Statistics Canada. Although relatively arbitrary in its origins, the indicator has broad acceptability and allows historical comparisons. For example, the low-income cut-off for a family of four living in a large Canadian city in 1993 was about $30,800; for a single parent with one child in a rural area the line would be $14,300 (National Council of Welfare 1993, p. 25).

While an income-based definition of poverty is necessary, we should also be aware that poverty is not just a matter of income. As Olson notes, "Poverty is . . . not a passively descriptive condition, it is a state whose facets are actively socially constructed, mediated by how people understand, think and act." (1991, p. 158). University students, for example, may temporarily have very low incomes without thinking of themselves as poor. However, income remains, especially over the longer term, as a strong predictor of other life events.

Using the Statistics Canada definitions, the overall poverty rate in Canada in 1991 was 16%; that is, 4.2 million people fell below those income thresholds. For children under 18, the rate was 18.3%, involving 1,210,000 children (NCW, 1993, pp. 3, 4). Most poor families fell well below the LICO levels; for example, in 1991 poor couples with children on average earned less than 70% of the cut-off (or about $21,000 for a family of four in a large city). Single-parent mothers earned less than 60% of the cut-off (NCW, 1993). In addition, about half again as many people live only slightly above the poverty line and can be considered as vulnerable to poverty (Barnhorst & Johnson, 1991, p. 22).

Another way of judging incomes of the poor is in comparison with incomes of all Canadian families. The average Canadian family with children under 19 had an income of just under $60,000 in 1991, while the average poor family had an income of about $18,600, or 32% of the average (NCW, 1993, p. 16).

Poverty rates fluctuate over time, falling during better economic times and rising during recessions. The poverty rate for the general population and for children fell significantly through the 1960s and 1970s, but has not changed very much since. The rate rose from 1980 until 1984, fell through 1989, then climbed again. Child poverty rates in Canada have not fallen below 14% even during the best years of the 1980s (National Council of Welfare, 1992). The 1991 numbers for children are about 1% less than the 1983 and 1984 highs.

Child poverty is not evenly distributed across Canada. Rates vary significantly by province, from a high of 27% in Manitoba to a low of 14.5% in British Columbia and Prince Edward Island. In all provinces, however, more than 50% of children of single-parent mothers are living in poverty, and the national rate for this group is 66% (NCW, 1993, p. 20). Poverty is also concentrated in certain sub-groups of the population. For example, the poverty rate among disabled persons is very high. Estimates are that poverty rates among aboriginal people, including children, are three times the national rate, or as high as 50% (Canada, 1991). Similarly, concentrations of poverty in the centres of large cities and in some rural areas of Canada are very high.

The most notable change in the poor population in recent years has been the drop in the number of poor seniors, the concomitant increase in the proportion of poor families, and especially with women and children. The poverty rate for seniors, more than double that of children in 1980, has fallen so that it is now only slightly higher. For many people near or below the poverty line government transfers such as pensions, social assistance and unemployment insurance are a major source of income. The Economic Council described recent history as "expansion of income transfers [offsetting] the growing inequality in labour incomes" (1992, p. 7), and noted that while disposable income poverty rates were around 16% through most of the 1970s and 1980s, market-income poverty rates would have been about 30% (1992, p. 7). The Council described Canada's income redistribution efforts as *modest* despite the sense of tax burden being expressed (p. 9).

Another important point about poverty rates is that they have remained relatively high in Canada despite the enormous growth in two-income families. The growth in labour force participation by women has not reduced the number of poor families very much (Economic Council 1992), although the National Council of Welfare estimates that more than twice as many families would be classified as poor if they did not have two incomes (NCW 1993, p. 23).

Child poverty comes in different guises. It may be helpful to distinguish among several groups within the overall population of poor people. The largest group is working families, with one or both parents working, whose income is simply insufficient. Rising average levels of unemployment, falling rates of real wages and the significant decreases in secure, middle-income jobs such as those in manufacturing have made it more difficult for Canadian families to support themselves. Most analysts agree that the overall state of the economy – the availability of good jobs – is the most critical determinant of poverty levels, and that when economic times are bad, those at the bottom of the income scale suffer most (Gunderson, Muszynski & Keck, 1990).

There are, as is well known, an increasing proportion of part-time, short-term, no-benefit jobs in Canada (Economic Council 1992, p. 30). At the same time, minimum wage rates in Canada have fallen steadily in real terms over the past decade. In 1975, on average, two Canadian wage earners at minimum wage would have earned enough income to put them about 10% above the poverty line. By 1985 the same couple would have been more than 15% below the poverty line (Gunderson, Muszynski, & Keck, 1990). "In no province would working full-time for the full year at the legal minimum wage enable even single persons without dependants or two income families with two children to escape poverty" (Gunderson, Muszynski & Keck, 1990, p.

114). In short, labour market income inequality has grown in Canada in recent years (Economic Council, 1992).

A second significant source of poverty for children is marriage breakdown, i.e. separation or divorce. It is clear that the economic implications of separation or divorce are serious and very negative for women (Gunderson, Muszynski & Keck, 1990). The Economic Council of Canada estimated that divorce resulted in an average 40% decrease in annual income for women and that the decrease remained severe for several years, while male incomes increased in the year after divorce. The poverty rate for women caught in marriage breakdown went from 16% before divorce to 37% in the year following. Low or no child support payments were identified as a major source of this problem (Economic Council, 1992, p. 49). Indeed, women are generally much more likely to live in poverty, since unattached older women constitute another large block of the poor.

A Digression on Single Parents

Educators frequently identify single-parent families as being linked to problems in the schooling of children. Many commentators are concerned that this focus on single parents, the great majority of whom are women, blames the victim instead of focusing attention on more important causal variables. Without undertaking a full discussion of this issue (interested readers can consult Hudson and Galaway, 1993), three important points will be made.

First, as has just been noted, female single parents (who constitute 90% of all single parents living with children) are overwhelmingly poor, and the breakdown of marriage is a major cause of their poverty. Poverty is one of the causes of family break-up (Osberg, 1981). Since poverty is so clearly linked to poorer educational outcomes, it seems quite likely that public policies providing better support to women after marriage breakdown – improved child care or better child support payments – could alleviate substantially the negative impacts that are now attributed to single-parenthood. Other countries, such as France, Britain or the Netherlands, have much lower rates of poverty among single parents than does Canada (Canadian Council on Social Development, 1992).

Second, female single parents face serious obstacles to economic success.

> *With few exceptions, the burden of childrearing has always been the responsibility of women. The single mother often shoulders the complete responsibility. She has the bulk of the financial burden for children and she is severely restricted in her ability to earn an adequate living. For example, even if child care is available, a woman with responsibility for children will be restricted in the number of hours she can work, is less able to work shift work, and will require a job with flexibility.* (Gunderson, Muszynski & Keck, 1990, p. 19)

Third, the evidence available, though chiefly from the U.S., does not support the view that single-parent families in themselves lead to poorer outcomes for children. Mark (1993) provides some evidence that single-parent families can be stronger units in that there may be less conflict in the home. Finn and Owings (1992) found no significant differences in school achievement between 2,500 children of single parents and 12,500 other children when family income and social class were controlled. The National Child Development Study in Britain has traced a group of children born in 1958. Findings through age 16 showed that children from single-parent families had lower levels of school achievement, but that these differences were small once socio-economic factors were taken into account (Ferri, 1993). Data from the 1986 Canadian General Social Survey (Gee, 1993) also show no significant differences in educational attainment between children in single-parent and two-parent families when SES is controlled.

Griffith (1984) has described, in one large Canadian school district, the way the category of single parent became a symbol of parental inadequacy and an excuse for children's school problems. This is an unfair, even dangerous, stigmatization that educators must avoid.

A third element of poverty, and the one that gets the most public attention, is children who are in families that are almost permanently dependent on social assistance. About one-half of those who are poor at any given time are estimated to suffer from continuing poverty (Economic Council 1992, p. 25). We do not know enough about this group, but it is likely that assisting them will require unique policy measures.

One clear finding of research that is often not reported is that very few people choose to accept social assistance because the money is good (Danziger & Wineberg, 1986; Wilson, 1987). Indeed, social assistance rates across Canada, although they vary significantly, are (except for some categories in Ontario) too low to lift recipients out of poverty. Moreover, almost half of the working poor do not receive any benefits from unemployment insurance or social assistance (Economic Council 1992, p. 37). Government payments to the poor do reduce the impact of poverty, though many of these payments – for example, 80% of unemployment insurance payouts – go to families or individuals who are not poor. Compared with other industrialized countries, Canada spends a relatively small proportion of its wealth on income support for the poor (Economic Council, 1992).

There is a considerable amount of movement of individuals and families in and out of poverty status (Economic Council 1992; National Council of Welfare 1990). The Economic Council estimates that as many as one in three Canadians will be poor at some time during their working lives (1992, p. 2). Many women do gradually recover from the financial effects of divorce, for example, and are able to generate incomes above poverty levels. Families may be thrown into poverty by job loss, but may recover if a new, reasonably-paying job is found. At the same time, there are families that remain trapped in poverty for many, many years.

The Social Planning Council of Winnipeg provided a clear and concise summary:

> *In sum, the majority of poor children are living in two–parent families with a head who has less than high school education but has been employed full time for the year. However the risk of being poor is greatest for a child six years old or younger who is supported by a single mother with less than a high school education working part time or not at all.* (Social Planning Council of Winnipeg, 1992, p. 13)

Policy Responses

What should be apparent from the preceding discussion is that just as the causes and correlates of poverty are multiple, so must policies to address poverty take various forms. For example, it is clear that high rates of unemployment are directly and strongly related to poverty levels. More jobs, and especially jobs that are secure, pay well and have reasonable benefits, are a critical part of any effort to reduce poverty. So are improvements in child care arrangements, in property division and income support after marriage breakdown, in public financial assistance programs, in job training and in many other areas.

Schools alone clearly cannot solve problems of poverty. At the most basic level, decreases in poverty depend on the macroeconomic situation (Danziger & Weinberg, 1986). If there are no jobs, if jobs pay badly, if supports for the disabled are poor or if adequate housing is not available, then poverty will continue to wreak havoc with people's lives despite the best efforts of educators. Moreover, several political analysts have noted that public support for anti-poverty policies is only likely when these measures are society-wide rather than targeted to the poor (Wilson, 1987; Heclo, 1986). Social critics have explained poverty as being a necessary part of our current economic structures. Even the oft-cited admonition to get a good education so as to earn a good income and avoid unemployment is increasingly doubtful as the numbers of well-educated poor and unemployed people rise (Gunderson, Muzynski & Keck, 1990). Although more education is statistically related to higher income, there is no guarantee that more education will lead to higher income for any given person, or for the society as a whole. Education levels in Canada have continued to rise in the last decade, but family incomes have not. More successful students in schools may, far from making everyone wealthy, simply lead to more competition for whatever decent jobs are available.

Nonetheless, because education is so directly and strongly affected by the deleterious consequences of poverty, concern about poverty should be an important educational issue. It does not presently have that status. Despite our knowledge of the importance of poverty as an influence on education, responses to poverty have tended to play a rather small, even marginal role in education policy and practice. Simply put, we have been doing much less than we could or should to address poverty as an educational issue.

Resource Allocation to Schools

One indicator of the low priority given to poverty in education is the level of resources committed to the issue. Since poverty is such a powerful influence on educational outcomes, one might expect that funding of schools would reflect that knowledge – that schools with higher poverty rates would receive significantly more money and that support for anti-poverty programs would be an important part of school funding programs. That is not the case.

In every Canadian province the flow of resources to schools is based primarily on enrolment. Typically, some kinds of enrolments are weighted more heavily for resource purposes than are others. Secondary schools almost always receive more resources per student than do elementary schools. Special education students are also funded more heavily, a problem discussed later in this paper. No provinces tie basic funding of schools to measures of socio-economic status.

As of 1988, only two provinces (Manitoba and Ontario) provided funding for compensatory education (Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 1988). Manitoba had about $3 million available for this purpose in 1987 compared to overall spending on public education of more than $800 million. Winnipeg School Division, which includes the entire urban core of the city, receives a special grant of $2 million per year from the province for inner-city education. This adds less than 1% to the Division's $220 million annual budget. Compare these figures to the more than $60 million that the province allocates each year for special education.

Money in itself will not address problems of education, of course. Resources must be used in effective ways, as discussed later in this paper. But funding is a proxy for the public level of concern about a given issue, and the small scale of financial support for schools facing serious issues of poverty indicates a low priority for this issue.

Why is Poverty Neglected?

Attention to poverty runs in cycles. One such cycle began in the early 1960s, led to a variety of public programs in many countries, and peaked in the early 1970s (Heclo, 1986; Silver & Silver, 1991). Out of this phase of concern came the concept of compensatory education and of early intervention. During the later 1970s and 1980s, poverty largely disappeared as a public policy issue in North America. In the past few years poverty has re-emerged on the public policy agenda, but in Canada almost all the work in this area has been in social welfare, as is evident from the citations in this paper. There have been few Canadian educational documents pointing out the impact of increasing levels of child poverty (see CTF, 1989, for a rare exception). Rather, the education policy agenda for the last few years has been much more taken with issues of economic competitiveness, standards and governance. Where educational efforts have emerged that are related to poverty, such as growing concern about race and gender issues, the important role that poverty plays in unequal opportunities is not always highlighted.

Bill Maynes, of the University of Alberta, studied poverty as a policy issue in the Edmonton public schools (Maynes, 1990, 1993). Maynes interviewed principals, superintendents and school trustees. He found that though there was wide recognition of the impact of child poverty on the schools, the district did not collect data on poverty or its impact, and few or no formal policy measures were in place or planned to address the issue. Even among principals in inner-city schools, who could speak forcefully and in detail about the nature and impact of poverty on children, Maynes found that:

> *. . . none of the principals referred to research or successful practice in other urban poor environments to argue that the programs they recommended would improve the success rates of poor children. . . . Regardless of motivation, principals were not actively advocating poverty-related causes. It seems a paradox that, while they believed strongly that the districts should provide more support for the educaiton of poor children, they were not assertively taking advantage of their opportunities to favorably influence the political will to bring that about.* (Maynes 1990, pp. 263, 265)

Why should this be so? What keeps poverty from having a more prominent place in the debate about education? The work of Maynes and others suggests several reasons. First, many educators and policy-makers believe that dealing with poverty is outside the mandate of the schools. Educators often cite the expanding expectations of schools to provide social services as a problem that takes attention away from a more traditional educational mission. Explicit attention to poverty may be seen as another instance of diverting attention from what schools, in the eyes of some, really should be doing – teaching knowledge and skills.

A second factor is the absence of a sense of strategy as to how to address poverty. Maynes (1990) found that administrators and trustees he interviewed could not identify a set of policies and practices that would constitute the basis for addressing poverty issues in schools. The issue is seen as too big, too intractable, for schools to be able to deal with it. Organization theory tells us that where no solutions are apparent, problems will get less attention (McKall & Kaplan, 1985; March 1984).

Also important in explaining the lack of attention to poverty in education is the absence of any strong political lobby pressing for action. Like other organizations, schools tend to respond to the issues that are placed on their agendas through various political processes. Vocational education, French immersion, special education and other school programs developed when interest groups, both inside and outside the system, began to organize and systematically demand action. The lobby groups for poverty tend to be weak. By definition poverty implies the absence of the resources necessary for effective political organization.

Yet there is good reason to think that schools could do more to address issues of poverty even if they cannot solve them. There are strategies known to be successful with poor children and their families, but we do not employ them widely in Canadian education.

Improving Education for the Poor

Improving Instruction. We have good reason to believe that poor children, already facing obstacles when they begin school, receive an education of lower quality than do their counterparts in less troubled settings. Essentially, poor children, because they typically have lower levels of achievement, get less instruction and also get instruction that is less interesting and less demanding than that given to other students. This cannot lead to success.

The traditional response of the school to students with low achievement has been some form of special or remedial education – withdrawal programs, special classes, tracking. Knapp et al. studied instruction in 85 elementary school classes with high concentrations of poor children in 3 states of the U.S. They describe the key tenets of beliefs about teaching children with low achievement as being emphasis on learners' deficits, a sequential skill mastery curriculum model requiring mastery of basics before any advanced skills can be taught, teacher-directed instruction, a heavy focus on classroom management that is uniform across content areas and the use of ability grouping, including supplemental instruction through pull-out programs (1991, p. 4).

Students in these settings may receive less instructional time instead of more. The instruction they do receive often focuses heavily on rote skill development, with little attention to higher order skills. Students' own backgrounds and knowledge are typically not brought into the curriculum to any extent. Knapp, Turnbull & Shields (1990), authors of a major U. S. study on educating children of poverty, conclude that our typical practices for these children set low expectations, place too much emphasis on behaviour control, use too much seatwork and greatly underemphasize the development of meaning by learners. Anderson and Pelliger (1990) reach the same conclusion in their literature review.

Teachers are well aware of the importance of poverty in affecting students' readiness to learn. Edwards and McKinnon concluded that the Nova Scotia teachers they studied "seem largely to accept the environmental-deficit position" (1987, p. 343). There is a danger that an acceptance of the importance of poverty turns into an acceptance of the negative outcomes of poverty, that educators conclude that their efforts will not avail. Knapp et al. note that while teachers frequently attributed children's academic problems to their poverty backgrounds, teachers did not alter their instructional practices consistent with their expressed beliefs in efforts to overcome some of the problems (1991, pp. 172-173). They also found that teachers' responses to teaching challenges were affected by teachers' personal background, by their beliefs about how their subjects should be taught and by their feelings of personal efficacy.

The issue is not, however, simply one of the practices of individual teachers. Teaching practices are strongly influenced by school and school district organization and policy. Critics of schooling of 20 years ago (Kohl, Kozol, Herndon, Goodman, Friedenberg) and of today clearly identify the organizational limits on good teachers. Tracking and grouping are largely determined at the school or district level, not by individual teachers. Some tracking is typically required by provincial or state curriculum frameworks, especially in secondary schools. Testing and reporting policies of schools or districts can have powerful influences on what teachers can or can't do. Padilla and Knapp (in press) show clearly how a variety of school, district, and state or provincial policies constrain teachers in responding to the needs of poor children. Coleman and LaRocque (1990) have demonstrated that school district policies and practices in Canada also have strong effects on what happens to students. Knapp and Shields (1990) report that most teachers they studied were simply following the guidelines of the district. Allington, studying literacy instruction, "concluded that few schools have organized instructional resources such that children who need access to larger amounts of high-quality instruction actually experience such access" (1990, pp. 1-3).

These findings do suggest some of the changes that need to be made, though here as in other areas of education there are unlikely to be simple right answers to the question of how we should teach. In general, students with achievement difficulties should receive as stimulating and challenging an instructional program as possible. Basic skill development needs to be integrated with more advanced skills. Instructional practices such as scaffolding, heterogeneous grouping, proleptic teaching, building on students' prior knowledge, peer tutoring and cognitive coaching all seem to have promise (Stein, Leinhardt & Bickel, 1989). Pullout programs do not appear to be particularly effective. Madden and Slavin (1989), reviewing evidence on the U.S. experience, conclude that

> *. . . the achievement of at-risk students can be significantly increased, either by making relatively inexpensive but extensive modifications in the regular instructional program or by implementing relatively expensive but intensive interventions as pullout programs.* (1989, p. 71)

Finally, Neufeld (1990) notes the importance of seeing school processes as being holistic rather than technical. She emphasizes the emotional and affective links between schools and students and the importance of developing positive student-teacher relationships. Poor children may bring many additional burdens into school with them, so supportive and understanding teachers can be particularly important to them.

Strengthening Preschool Education. One of the first and best known strategies for alleviating the impacts of poverty was the development of preschool programs such as Headstart in the U.S. One problem of poverty is that poor students may begin school without the socialization experiences that prepare other students for the kinds of activities that schools conduct. Ann Manicom (1981) has illustrated the ways in which schools often make very explicit assumptions about the work that the family (usually the mother at home) has already done. As a very concrete example, she points out that when children initially learn to paint, they tend to mix paints indiscriminately. Red paint brushes are dabbed into a variety of other colours and the result of this cross-mixing is that the paint is soon a uniform grey, unsuitable to both the student and the teacher. If a parent has done some prior work at home such as instructing the child to *place paint brushes only in similar colcured paint jars,* then one can proceed to other more complex levels. If no one has given such instructions at home, the teacher must help develop the child's skills until they reach this level. This, she sugggests, is where the trouble starts for children whose socio-economic circumstances make it difficult for them to meet the teacher's expectations. Generally, the practices of middle-class parents tend to complement the work expectations of teachers, while the demands for child care, employment and the meeting of basic needs of poorer families and mothers often conflict with the demands of teachers. It is a crucial impediment to learning that, when observing differences in *who can draw,* the teacher is really seeing differences in experience with drawing and not innate talent or ability. Because of their work demands, it is then very easy for teachers to see these differences not as as a lack of experience (needing a few extra lessons) but as ability differences. What is insidious about such a judgment, Manicom argues, is that it quickly leads to formal and informal forms of tracking and stratification based upon explicit and tacit labelling procedures.

The rationale for preschool programs is to provide students with the background they will need to meet the demands of schooling. Early advocates of preschool programs often saw them as ways of fixing the deficiencies of poor children. More recent work has moved away from deficiency theories towards recognizing that there are multiple kinds of valid and useful knowledge. However, as long as schools require particular kinds of skills and behaviour, whether these are superior or not is a moot point; to be successful in school, children must master these practices and preschool can provide a means of doing so.

The long-term impacts of Headstart and other early interventions have been and remain controversial among researchers. Early evaluations of Headstart indicated that it fell short of the claims of its proponents (Silver & Silver, 1991). As we have more experience with preschool programs, though, there is a growing consensus that they are valuable and can have long-lasting impacts, especially with appropriate follow-up. Karweit concluded that "there is an immediate and sizeable cognitive effect for participation in preschool that is diminished but still detectable in the elementary grades." (1989, p. 87). Other researchers have come to similar conclusions (Barnett & Escobar, 1987; Stein, Leinhardt & Bickel, 1989; Reynolds, 1993). The very positive long-term results of the Perry Pre-School program in Michigan are often cited (Schweinhart, Barnes & Weikart, 1993), although they involve only a small number of students. Another frequently cited exemplary program is James Comer's (1988) School Development Program.

There are a number of conceptual models of preschool education being promoted and no strong basis in research evidence at this point for preferring one to another. Karweit (1989) concludes that having a thoughtful, well-implemented approach may be more important than what the approach actually is. Parent involvement in such programs is often promoted, though a recent review found that the limited available evidence did not show the strong positive results claimed by proponents (White, Taylor & Moss, 1992).

Building Links with Parents and the Community. Schools tend to value a particular body of skills and experiences and to carry negative images of students whose background does not meet these expectations. Yet all children come to school with a range of knowledge and experience. If schools can build on what students already know, we are more likely to be successful in developing the skills we value.

Much has been written about the importance of working closely with parents. There can be no doubt that families are powerful influences on children and play a key role in fostering success even under difficult circumstances such as poverty (Reynolds, 1993). Michael Howe (1990) has suggested that our main opportunity to improve students' learning now rests with parents and families more than with schools. Schools tend to see parents' role as being to reinforce the skills and practices of the school. However, the most powerful impacts appear to develop when there is true mutuality between the school and the community such that each party learns to value and respect the knowledge, skills and goals of the other. Schools work with parents and families to promote the skills required for educational success, while also seeking input from parents and families about the adaptations the school needs to make to be more successful with students. Poor communities often contain large populations from minority cultural backgrounds, which means that educators need to be particularly open to examining school practices, not just asking parents to do things differently to fit traditional schooling. For example, schools with high concentrations of aboriginal students will need to work with aboriginal community groups to create successful models of schooling.

Many models exist for school–family–community collaboration. Nettles (1991) develops a taxonomy of four approaches – conversion (of students to fit the school model), mobilization (to increase citizen participation in education), allocation (using community resources to strengthen education) and instruction (teaching students about community relations). Her review of research provides many examples of each of these strategies. Included are prenatal programs, parent education, peer tutoring, work experience, parent or parent–child centres in schools, mentoring, integrated social service delivery in schools and decentralization of school governance, to name a few. Nettles concludes:

> *. . . programs can have positive effects on school-related behaviors and achievement as well as on attitudes . . . the consistency of positive outcomes . . . suggests that community programs may be potentially useful interventions.* (1991, p. 397)

Although far from uncommon, all of these activities, as has been noted earlier, tend to be supplemental or peripheral rather than part of the core program of schools. They command low levels of resources and are often vulnerable to budget cuts in ways that traditional classroom based programs are not. Schools continue to focus many more resources both on traditional programs and on remediation programs than they do on proactive work with parents and communities (Levin, 1994).

Schools are most likely to use strategies of conversion and allocation – focusing on working with parents to help children fit into schools successfully. There is reason to think that an increased focus on mobilization activities may be valuable. Tepperman (1988) has pointed out the importance of collective action in dealing with social issues. One of the reasons poverty is not more visible on the policy agenda of schools is the lack of political pressure from the poor (Levin & Young, 1994). In areas where marginalized groups have organized themselves, improvements in educational outcomes have often followed. A good example is the improvement in First Nations education in Canada as Bands have taken control over their own schools from the federal government (Levin, 1992). One of the important roles schools can play is to help poor families and communities organize to define and promote their own interests. In the current stress on collegiality, community and partnerships in education working with poor communities to help them mobilize themselves would seem to be a justifiable and useful strategy for schools.

Schools have a further responsibility in regard to the political status of poverty: to remind the public that poverty is much more than an issue of schooling. The consequences of poverty for educational outcomes are enormous, and although I have argued that there are important measures schools can and should take, educators also need to take every opportunity to remind policy makers and the public that addressing poverty and improving educational outcomes must involve a total social policy effort. While doing everything we can to alleviate the impact of poverty we must firmly refuse to accept responsibility for its existence or its eradication. As Mike Males wrote in relation to teenage pregnancy (itself strongly linked to poverty):

> *. . . educators [should] frankly and publicly declare at every opportunity that schools have no magic wand with which to rescue the nation from . . . expedient anti-youth policies. Education lobbies are in a position to vigorously impress [sic] on policy makers the fact that reducing the incidence of early pregnancy requires comprehensive increases in support for impoverished families, for the prevention of child abuse, for the enforcement of laws governing payment ofchild support, and for investment in opportunities for young people.* (1994, p. 410)

Conclusion

Poverty is a critical educational concern. Schools cannot solve problems of poverty, and should say so publicly. At the same time, they can be more effective in alleviating the impact of poverty and, especially, in assisting the victims of poverty to understand and advance their own welfare. We do have some considerable knowledge about how to do so. None of these ideas is new or especially difficult to carry forward. But the necessary actions would require significant changes in how schools organize instruction, and how schools view and interact with parents and communities. Resources would have to be shifted from older and more advantaged students to the younger and less advantaged, from remediation to outreach, from working in the school to working with the community. We would need to be willing to share control much more widely than is presently the case. Seeing education as something that is done by teachers in school buildings according to a standardized scheme is simply inconsistent with what we know about helping poor children. Many educators and others have long known and advocated these changes; the question is whether the rest of us have the will to do what is needed.

Note

I thank my colleagues Jonathan Young and J. Anthony Riffel for their helpful comments on an earlier draft.

References

Allington, R. (1990) Effective literacy instruction for at-risk children. In Knapp, M. & Shields, P., *Better Schooling for the Children of Poverty: Alternatives to Conventional Wisdom.* Vol. II: Commissioned Papers and Literature Review. Study of Academic Instruction for Disadvantaged Students (Chapter I). Washington: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Budget and Evaluation.

Anderson, L. & Pelliger, L. (1990) Synthesis of research on compensatory and remedial education. *Educational Leadership*, 48(1), 10-16.

Barnett, W. & Escobar, C. (1987) The economics of early educational intervention: A review. *Review of Educational Research*, 57(4), 387-414.

Barnhorst, R. & Johnson, L. (Eds.), (1991) *The State of the Child in Ontario.* Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Canada (December 1991) *Canada's Children: Investing in our Future.* Report of the Standing Committee on Health and Welfare, Social Affairs, Seniors and the Status of Women, Sub-Committee on Poverty.

Canadian Council on Social Development. (June, 1992) *Economic and Social Welfare for Families and Children:* Newsletter No. 1. Ottawa: The Canadian Council on Social Development.

Canadian Teachers' Federation. (1989) *Children, Schools and Poverty.* Ottawa.

Coleman, J. (1987) Families and Schools. *Educational Researcher*, 16(6), 32-38.

Coleman, P. & LaRocque, L. (1990) *Struggling to be Good Enough: Administrative Practices and School District Ethos.* London: Falmer Press.

Comer, J. (1988) Educating poor minority children. *Scientific American*, 159(5), 42-48.

Council of Ministers of Education, Canada. (1988) *The Financing of Elementary and Secondary Education in Canada*. Toronto: The Council.

Danziger, S. & Weinberg, D. (1986) *Fighting poverty: What Works and What Doesn't*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Economic Council of Canada. (1992) *The New Face of Poverty: Income Security Needs of Canadian Families*. Ottawa: Ministry of Supply and Services.

Edwards, J. & McKinnon, M. (1987) The continuing appeal of disadvantage as deficit: A Canadian study in a rural context. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 12, 330-367.

Ferri, E. (1993) Socialization experiences of children in lone parent families: Evidence from the British National Child Development Study. In Hudson, J. and Galaway, B. (Eds.), *Single Parent Families* (pp. 281-290). Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing.

Finn, J. & Owings, M. (1992) Family structure and school performance in 8th grade. Unpublished paper, State University of New York, Buffalo.

Gee, E. (1993) Adult outcomes associated with childhood family structure: An appraisal of research and an examination of Canadian data. In Hudson, J. and Galaway, B. (Eds.), *Single Parent Families* (pp. 291-310). Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing.

Griffith, A. (1984) Ideology, education and single parent families: The normative ordering of families through schooling. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto.

Gunderson, M., Muszynksi, L., & Keck, J. (1990) *Women and Labour Market Poverty*. Ottawa: Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

Heclo, H. (1986) The political foundations of anti-poverty policy. In Danziger, S. & Weinberg, D. (Eds.), *Fighting Poverty: What Works and What Doesn't* (pp. 312-340). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Howe, Michael. (1990) *The Origins of Exceptional Abilities*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Hudson, J. & Galaway, B. (Eds.), (1993) *Single-Parent Families*. Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing.

Karweit, N. (1989) Effective preschool programs for students at risk. In R. Slavin; N. Karweit; & N. Madden, *Effective Programs for Students At Risk* (pp. 75-102). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Knapp, M. & Shields, P. (1990) *Better Schooling for the Children of Poverty: Alternatives to Conventional Wisdom*. Vol. II: Commissioned Papers and Literature Review. Study of Academic Instruction for Disadvantaged Students. Washington: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Budget and Evaluation.

Knapp, M., Turnbull, B., & Shields, P. (1990) New directions for educating the children of poverty. *Educational Leadership*, 48(1), 4-8.

Knapp, M., et al. (March, 1991) *What is Taught, and How, to the Children of Poverty*. Interim Report from a two-year investigation. Washington: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Budget and Evaluation.

Levin, B. (1992) School-based management. *Canadian School Executive*, 11(9), 30-32.

Levin, B. (1994) Rethinking resources in education. *The Canadian Administrator*, 33(4), 1-6.

Levin, B. & Young, J. (1994) *Understanding Canadian schools: An Introduction to Educational Administration*. Toronto: Harcourt Brace.

Madden, N. & Slavin, R. (1989) Effective pullout programs for students at risk. In Slavin, R., Karweit, N., & Madden, N. *Effective Programs for Students At Risk* (pp. 52-72). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Males, M. (1994) Poverty, rape, adult/teen sex: Why 'pregnancy prevention' programs don't work. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 75(5), 407-410.

Manicom, A. (1981) Reproduction of class: The relations between two work processes. Paper presented to the Political Economy of Gender Relations in Education Symposium, Toronto, October.

March, J. (1984) How we talk and how we act: Administrative theory and administrative life. In Sergiovanni, T. & Corbally, J. (Eds.), *Leadership and Organizational Culture* (pp. 18-35). Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Mark, D. (April, 1993) High achieving African-American children in low income single parent families: The home learning environment. Paper presented to the American Educational Research Association, Atlanta.

Maynes, W. (1990) *The Education of Edmonton's Urban Poor: A Policy Perspective.* Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Alberta, Edmonton.

Maynes, W. (1993) Child poverty in Canada: Challenges for educational policymakers. *Canadian Review of Social Policy*, 32, 1-15.

McKall, M. & Kaplan, R. (1985) *Whatever It Takes: Decision Makers at Work.* Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.

McLoyd, V. & Wilson, L. (1990) Maternal behavior, social support, and economic conditions as predictors of distress in children. In McLoyd, V. & Flanagan, C. Constance (Eds.), *Economic Stress: Effects on Family Life and Child Development* (pp. 49-68). New Directions for Child Development, No. 35. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

National Council of Welfare. (April, 1990) Fighting Child Poverty. Brief to the Sub-Committee on Poverty of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health and Welfare, Social Affairs, Senior and the Status of Women.

National Council of Welfare. (Autumn 1992) *Poverty Profile, 1980-1990.* Ottawa: The Council.

National Council of Welfare. (Winter 1993) *Poverty Profile Update for 1991.* Ottawa: The Council.

Nettles, S. (1991) Community involvement and disadvantaged students: A review. *Review of Educational Research*, 61, 379-406.

Neufeld, B. (1990) Classrom management and instructional strategies for the disadvantaged learner. In Knapp, M. & Shields, P., *Better Schooling for the Children of Poverty: Alternatives to Conventional Wisdom.* Vol. II: Commissioned Papers and Literature Review. Study of Academic Instruction for Disadvantaged Students (Chapter XI). Washington: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Budget and Evaluation.

Offord, D., Boyle, M., & Jones, B. (1987) Psychiatric disorder and poor school performance among welfare children in Ontario. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry* 32, 518-525.

Olson, P (1991) Poverty and education in Canada. In Ray, D. & Ghosh, R. (Eds.), *Social change and education in Canada*, (pp. 158-174). 2nd edition Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Osberg, L. (1981) *Economic inequality in Canada.* Toronto: Butterworths.

Padilla, C. & Knapp, M. (in press) How the policy environment shapes instruction in high poverty classrooms. In Levin, B., Fowler, W., & Walberg, H. (Eds.), *Organizational Influences on Educational Productivity.* Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Radwanski, G. (1987) *Ontario Study of the Relevance of Education, and the Issue of Dropouts.* Toronto: Ontario Ministry of Education.

Reynolds, A. (April 1993) Distinguishing characteristics of children at risk who are successful in school. Paper presented to the American Educational Research Association, Atlanta.

Schweinhart, L., Barnes, H., & Weikart, D. (1993) *Significant Benefits: The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study Through Age 17.* Ypsilanti, MI: High Scope Press, 1993.

Silver, H. & Silver, P. (1991) *An Educational War on Poverty*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Slavin, R., Karweit, N., & Madden, N. (1989) *Effective Programs for Students At Risk*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Social Planning Council of Winnipeg. (February 1992) *Child Poverty in Manitoba: An Approach towards its Elimination*. Winnipeg: The Council.

Stein, M., Leinhardt, G., & Bickel, W. (1989) Instructional issues for teaching students at risk. In Slavin R., Karweit, N., & Madden N., *Effective Programs for Students At Risk* (pp. 145-194). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Tepperman, L. (1988) *Choices and Chances: Sociology for Everyday Life*. Toronto: Holt Rinehart & Winston.

White, K., Taylor, M., & Moss, V. (1992) Does research support claims about the benefits of involving parents in early intervention programs? *Review of Educational Research*, 62(1), 91-125.

Wilson, W. (1987) *The Truly Disadvantaged*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

School, Ho: Students and Academics Look at Improvements

Richard G. Townsend and George Bedard
The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

The idea behind this paper on contexts is simple. A comparison of high-schoolers' and scholars' views of school improvement may reveal critical dispositions in both groups. If gaps exist, some bridging between students and academics may prove useful.

The students' ideas come from over 650 secondary-school seniors who submitted 750-word essays in four contests, from 1989 to 1993, on topics related to school improvement.[1] The professors are William Stewart of SUNY Potsdam, Frank Riessman of City University of New York, Austin Swanson of SUNY Buffalo, Ray Rist now of George Washington University (and the U.S. General Accounting Office), and James Cibulka of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, as represented by his opening chapter in this book. The first four scholars separately published their own versions of what Cibulka does at the outset of this book, assessing what has led education to its present fate and projecting what future directions to take. Since each of these professors reframes the discussion about reform, together they heuristically offer a lively array of issues for reflecting – and reflecting on – students' priorities.[2]

As it happens, no student in our population even comes close to using the exact vocabulary of Stewart's plea for flexible testing, of Riessman's wish for inculcating skills of cooperation, of Swanson's advocacy of efficiency and other policy objectives, of Rist's despair over policy myopia, and of Cibulka's anticipation of policy options. The five academics' statements generally are more abstract and certainly less evocative than terms our student essayists routinely deploy. Still, our adolescents *do* approximate certain of the professors' meanings, just as they also go beyond several of the professors' constructions.[3]

The inclusion of student voices, from a conceptual framework, may be seen as an exercise in educational micro-politics, "the study of the less visible, behind the scenes, negotiations of power" (Anderson & Herr, 1993). The micro-politics of education focuses on the "underworld" of the "subjective reality of the clients of educational institutions and the 'core technology' of teaching and learning." That phenomenological understanding of students' lives could lead to crafting better policies that reflect more closely the needs of the clients within educational systems.

With all the pressures for school reform today, it is common for researchers to sort through polls or reports of student organizations to identify what students have to say about their schools. Thus, for instance, a Working Paper for Ontario's Royal Commission on Learning (1994) distills hundreds of students' general disappointments with their curriculum and their overall wish to participate in their schools' decision-making. Unfortunately, however, the oral and written comments submitted to Royal Commission seldom are as evocative as the ones offered below from contestants competing to be Young Ontario Essayist of the Year. (Perhaps students' blood is more stirred by the chance to win an essay contest than to advise a royal commission?) In any event, as straight reportage, the Commission's Working Paper does not draw upon academic frameworks, much as we do here with reference to Stewart, Riessman, Swanson, et al. As a result, the forthcoming mix of American research perspectives with Ontarian student voices should provide an uncommonly broad 'click' about what's desirable in school improvement. Beyond that, somewhat provocatively we go further than others in the book at hand, holding that in some ways students should be considered partners with teachers and parents in the educational enterprise. This theme is consistent with one of the principles of Theodore Sizer's Coalition of Essential Schools: there students are to become active participants – students as workers taking responsibility for planning, governance, and curriculum – in determining their learning environment (Parker & Case, 1994).

Students' Convergences and Divergences with Stewart's Curricula

In the most avowedly pedagogical of the five scholars' approaches to school improvement, Stewart opens with the claim that "school reform involves much more than simply teaching students how to perform well on tests." He dismisses initiatives to raise academic standards in the 1980s which "were more significant for what they failed to accomplish than for what they achieved." New work "must recognize school achievement as a dynamic process" where content must be the means to an end itself.

Coinciding with Stewart's disposition, the young Ontario essayists value the English instructor, the debate coach, and the math or physical education teachers who open students up to see "the big picture" beyond the content specifics of their domains, "so that stuff other than academics can be learned." Those teachers' real lessons are said to be about communicating or "the importance of striving and doing one's best." Students respect faculty who "grab" them about the importance of learning "to excel, to draw conclusions, and to formulate intelligent decisions." Adolescents would improve schools by ensuring that more teachers could work in the same horizon-expanding mode, cultivating numeracy as well as print, media, and computer literacy. In this vein, several essayists use that vogue word among educators, the curriculum needs to be "relevant." This seems especially so for those few who indicate they look, ambitiously, for secondary schools to provide much of life's training.

Student voices reflect multiple realities. One student writes of the affirmative powers of two particular teachers:

> *It is said that through the course of your life that someone will influence you in some way. I strongly believe it happened here. Whether Mr. Rossi forced me not to give up on my dreams or Miss Josinskas made me do it one step at time, in some way it had an effect on me. I don't think you can find a more dedicated group of people . . .*

On the other hand, another student from a different school sees school life as an exercise in adult manipulative power, where education resembles a biological process of cloning:

> *The theme at this school is this: teachers try to create a new generation of teachers and the administration encourages promising young administrators, while enforcing the role of the follower on others. The school works well for a select few, but for the rest it is no better than an expensive way of enforcing a narrow set of ideas and keeping troublemakers off the street.*

Our two students remind us that schools are cultures. If a student identifies with the dominant school culture, then a sense of communal affirmation is possible, with elders seen as helping youth through a difficult passage. If one experiences the culture as manipulative and alien, then school life is a tale of the chosen few and the unchosen many.

[At this point, the reader–practitioner or researcher may be reacting adversely: "What's new about the students' disposition here? Are this chapter's other themes as familiar as the one presented so far?" Our answer is "Yes, and the reader who only wants hard data on what to fix in schools may not care to stick with this paper any further." If, however, the reader cares about students' interpretations of school improvement, forbear: a picture of their perky realities will emerge.]

Stewart would move away from textbook-dominated courses, and while a few of our essayists would disagree by requiring an even greater amount of reading, most would join Stewart in valuing self-paced study, teaching that is audio-visual, and hands-on experiences of active learning. As might be expected, other students use the essay contest as an opportunity to thumb a nose at the parental generation, i.e., these young people bemoan adult pedagogues who are "uncreative," too "set in their ways," "unable to lead a good discussion," and "forgetful of what it is like to be a student." That some teachers are not accountable is an implicit theme in about ten percent of the essays. Instructional verve is absent when "progression in teaching techniques does not seem to advance as the student moves up to different grade levels." Sometimes the gallows humor of the young surfaces, as in one young man's recollection of a biology class that was more of a turn-off than a turn-on:

> *For five months, I listened to this monotonous voice speaking from the front of the classroom and speaking to the plants at the back of the classroom. There was no blackboard work and no connections were made to the text or anything. I hope our friends in the vegetable kingdom gained more from the experience than I did. . . . So it is that many of us look upon high school as an archetypal journey to hell.*

Stewart doesn't phrase his similar complaint that memorably.

Other students cut a wide swath to appraise their classroom experience, including concerns that are ergonomic, psychological, pedagogical, sartorial, and personal hygienic:

> *When students aren't developing eyestrain headaches from taking notes from teachers who can't write or even print in a neat or legible way, they are sitting on uncomfortable, orthopedically incorrect seats . . .*
>
> *Some teachers walk into classrooms looking like they have just had an argument with their spouse and are ready to take their anger out on any student that dares to talk to them . . .*
>
> *With some teachers, it seems almost painful for them to teach. Other teachers look as if they are bored out of their minds . . .*
>
> *As for teachers' wardrobes, their wrinkled, grubby clothes and messy mop hairstyles are usually about 10 years out of date.*
>
> *Male teachers have visible tufts of nose hairs. How can a student learn, when instead of concentrating on the lesson at hand, his or her eyes are distracted by sprouting nose hairs?*

The sardonic scope and detail of these jabs remind us of the hard scrutiny marking Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* and the cynical cheek of Holden Caufield.

Importantly, students have one wider expectation than Stewart – about a seventh of them say they want more humanity in their teaching. Thus, "If teachers take a more pleasant and caring attitude toward teaching and their students, they will be happier themselves.[and school will no longer be] a scary, dull, boring place." Evidently, vulnerability is a virtue that many teachers deny in their self-presentations, for essayists grieve that their instructors fail "to tell students about themselves, as normal folks. Self-disclosure would make students feel more comfortable" in trusting and in learning content from faculty. Too often, students say, instructors' out-of-school disappointments, pet peeves, dreams, and joys are too invisible.

Three student voicings about humanity and education also extend to other key players in school in addition to teachers: the principal, guidance counsellors, and librarians:

> *The principal is unknown to me . . . I wish he would take some time out to meet me. I guess I have the ability to walk into his office and start chatting to him, but I'd feel too uncomfortable. I don't get into trouble and I have not had the privilege of getting my name on the honour role, so I never get the chance to meet him.*
>
> *The guidance counsellors make undue efforts to parallel establishments in the adult world – forcing students to stand and wait in long lines outside the guidance office, only to have them chastised by the secretary on reaching the front. The reasoning behind this is simple: patience, being a virtue, must be drilled in preparation for having to wait some day in lengthy supermarket checkout lines or in banks. Guidance appointments are looked upon as a 'shut up and do what I tell you' session.*

> *The library is closed for 20 minutes during lunch, prime studying time. Why? The librarians need a break.*

These student voices seem to argue that administrative isolation and a plethora of rules tend to push the imperatives of bureaucracy at the expense of shared human values and to the detriment of client orientation. The hidden curriculum by which schools instill suitable work habits and discipline in students, our students tell us in ironic tones, is neither hidden nor eminently functional from their perspective.

With regard to marking, no student calls for – as Stewart more keenly does – anecdotal reports, checklists, sociometric devices, work samples, rating scales, and journals to be among the bases for multi-faceted evaluation. Rather, almost a quarter of the students vouch for more rigour, but in very traditional measurements of learning. And because Canadian colleges and universities do not require applicants to take Scholastic Achievement Tests, over a dozen of these young Ontarians clamour for a return to province-wide proficiency exams (abandoned in the 1960s) so all seniors could be rated for post-secondary admission by common and high standards. "The pressure of those exams," one essayist advises, "would coerce students into working harder at their academics." As it is now, as another senior speaks for others who refer to the principle of merit, "there is always the possibility that a student in a better school or with a tough teacher will be edged out of university placement by someone who has an 85 percent average and your class average is 65." Stewart, who begins his article expressing dismay that school reforms have focused overmuch on acquisition of content and on standardized tests that only measure cognitive learning, might wish that (1) this last student (and others too) were not so preoccupied with a mark and (2) more comprehensive profiles could be prepared for each student.

In the end, Stewart again comes across as more of the revolutionary about marking than all these Ontario students, as he argues that other important dimensions of learning – like attitudes, sports, creativity, and proficiency in the fine and performing arts – deserve to be identified and weighed by employers and post-secondary admissions officers too. [Yet even Stewart is not as radical, say, as present-day British reformers who would abolish a high proportion of marks being awarded for course work while also exempting from exams children of very low abilities.]

Other curricular imperatives that Stewart promulgates do not resonate with what our essayists envisage either. Evidently not shared by a single adolescent in our population of 650 essayists is Stewart's enthusiasm for community-based learning, team teaching, comprehensive computer usage, between-course coordination of subject-matter, and organizing the school day into flexible modules.

Meanings that students find in school activities bespeak a sense of reality that occasionally Stewart misses. For instance, just two students put in a good word for a guidance counsellor (i.e., "I had her help in choosing my future and building around it" and "When my folks were divorcing, she was a great friend"). In nine other essays, counsellors are regarded as "misleading" in their attempts to analyze interests and abilities for a better choice of futures: commonly, the counsellors are seen as underselling apprenticeship programs while overselling university programs. Further, when counselling is referred to, most students lack Stewart's great faith in guidance-related activities ultimately meeting students' needs. "From elementary and secondary school, counselling is abysmal," a Toronto resident opines, and as a small-town senior sums up, "It is probable that you may never find a suitable counsellor." If students are to heed guidance counsellors, and if the latter are going to be as centrally constructive as Stewart globally wishes, one student's recommendation may bear examination: seeing visits to a counsellor as stigmatizing the students involved, she proposes that the government use television and radio to promote the benefits of such visits.

Students Largely Ignore Riessman's Dynamic of Cooperation

The nub of Frank Riessman's insight is that help in the context of needing help is as important, or more important, than merely receiving help. In this regard, the students differ from Riessman ostensibly.

Tending to underline inadequacy, help-receiving is seen by Frank Riessman as casting the helpee in a dependent role made more asymmetrical because of the higher status of the professional help-giver. Hence, Riessman perceives the helpee as being automatically deprived of those benefits that accrue to those who assist others. The helper gains the increased self-esteem which flows from gratification in being able to support those in need. So that those who ordinarily receive aid can function as producers of help, Riessman would convert helpees into helpers.

Although this notion is one that goes against the grain of selected trends toward mystification and gross entrepreneurial professionalism in human-service fields such as education, a number of program administrators in North American schools actually have built upon Riessman's understanding. Thus entire tenth-grade classes, including students who are doing poorly as well as those who are doing well, have been trained to tutor junior-high students who in turn teach sixth-grade students who thereupon tutor third-grade students, and so on. Similarly, youngsters with various disabilities have been given chances to instruct both disabled and non-disabled children, positive outcomes being attributed both to tutors and to tutees. This formula has congruence of course with others' work in cooperative learning (e.g. Slavin, 1990).

In various forms and places, Frank Riessman has been writing-up this theme for the past 25 years. The implications of this idea are broad enough to have impact on (for example) the testing, guidance, and teaching concerns that Stewart and various students raised in our preceding section. Nonetheless, as may be inferred from all but a few of the students' essays, Riessman's suggestion is not yet an idea whose time truly has come (to Ontario).

More palpably, to some students, the notion of help may come up directly – but then only obliquely (in statements that schools should serve social as well as business needs). Or a sense of community emerges restrictedly, as in this passage:

> *In many classes, I ask for help and the teachers say they will when they are finished helping other students and then they forget . . . leaving you to figure it out on your own. Then when a test comes and you fail it, teachers comment, 'You should have come to me for help.'*

It does not escape a number of students that certain teachers avoid their school community's responsibilities by skipping pre- and after-school hours officially set aside for extra assistance for students. Even so, the larger point is that the essayists seem to regard aid or out-and-out cooperation as a gift that only teachers (occasionally) bestow – assumedly, only faculty are "up" for the status-enhancing activity of helping others.

What are we to make of adolescents who do not particularly envisage one student's iron as sharpening another's? Are the adolescents in this population too narcissistic or independent to admit that they get by with a little help from their friends? Do these high-school seniors feel dumb or shy about turning to a peer for guidance in figuring out assignments? Do they sense their peers will be offended to receive help, or that one's fellows are helped at the cost of falling behind in one's own work? In classes, have these students had, as one reports "a bellyful of group-work" and experiences that were counter-productive or alienating? Alternatively, are these seniors over-reacting to the slogan that our is "a competitive society," which surely is the most overused phrase throughout their essays (mentioned 14 times, sometimes in connection with Canada's recession)? Whatever combination of forces may be responsible, simply on the face of the language in these 650 essays, we are puzzled that only one young Ontarian directly took up Frank Riessman's theme of cooperation. Our assumption had been that the very closeness of adolescent subcultures would prompt many of the young essayists to see peer-coaching as a way to improve their learning.

Perhaps the lack of student references to peer counselling and cooperation stem from the way student voices perceive student culture or, more aptly, subcultures within schools, based on gender, age, ethnicity, and cliques that divide and redivide the student population with the regularity and force of ocean tides. An administrative and teacher-defined concept of peer cooperation is not a common element in an adolescent world of "ins and outs" and "we versus them," as voiced by students in different schools.

> *If a girl at our school has problems with her boyfriend, by the end of the day there are three times as many girls mad at that boy. At our school, the females tend to stick with females and the males with the males . . .*
>
> *Cliques are most obvious at break and lunch hours. . . . Most of the time students from the different groups do not associate with one another or fail to acknowledge each other's presence. This happens all the time, even if they have been close neighbours for their entire lives.*
>
> *[T]he true reasons for attending learning facilities are tossed into the wind as young maidens in mini-skirts strut down the hall . . . when reality finally strikes and students realize that school is not a socializing arena, the response is instant dislike and animosity. . . . Conformity is only natural among cliques, for once labeled with a stereotype many of my friends find it too frightful to change their image. Consequently only one type of person is in student council . . . Students would rather complain than try to change the things they dislike.*

> *Immediately I found myself fighting to be one of the in crowd and be socially acceptable. This takes a lot out of one's self esteem if you are always trying to be someone else and think that being an individual is stupid.*
>
> *One possible explanation for school spirit [disappearing] is the number of students who have after school jobs. This make it impossible for many to remain for any after-school activities. . . . Now the initiation has been eliminated for the grade 9s, and so has the camping excursion to Terra Cotta. These chances to get to know one another are gone.*

The student subculture is composed of many voices that elude labeling. At once defined by penetrating insight and yet riddled with the contradictory tensions of adolescence, our student voices caution against sorting the student population into monolithic categories without first addressing the rather durable, if troubling, subcultures that mitigate against "school improvement" interventions – such as peer counselling and cooperation.

Students Attuned to Swanson's Policy Objectives

Swanson is in the company of contemporary researchers who sort out the efficacy of top-down and bottom-up channels for communication and action. These investigators reflect on contradictory pressures to emphasize, on the one hand, change via provincial/state controls and, on the other hand, change via dispersed, self-initiated processes at school sites. A challenge for the 1990s is to redesign our governance structures to "use human talents, expertise, and energy in providing educational services suitable to the times."

None of our students delve at all into one of Swanson's prime policy objectives for education, efficiency. Given the power of schools to allocate individuals to probable destinies in the occupational order, could the reason for this omission be that school efficiency is something of an off-putting concept to students about whom educators are supposed to be efficient? Also, these Ontario adolescents do not notably evince Swanson's interest in the policy objective of connecting economic growth with education. That omission is unexpected too, especially since this young group are members of a generation thought to set records for part-time jobs after school. [Perhaps, however, part-time employees do not volunteer for essay contests?]

Because they do devote considerable space to two of Swanson's foci, so will we – on (1) who should rule, a question that touches on liberty, and (2) equality and fraternity.

Who should rule? School-site autonomy, shared decision-making among staff members, and regulatory simplicity are among the ideas currently being touted as a new wave in educational administration. They are not ideas that our essayists mentioned directly. But to the extent that they approach a discussion of governance, Ontario essayists would agree with a proposition that Swanson puts forward that "the optimal provision of educational services requires the distribution of authority among government (the Ministry), teaching professionals, and families.

Several students attest to the importance of Swanson's first actor in the school improvement process, general government, regarded as a rightful authority that "should be strict with its teacher appraisals," should "see that we have enough computers'" and "ought to allow the Lord's Prayer to be said in school." Provincial authorities may be responsible for policy directions that students disagree with, but by and large the blame is attached to local authorities while respect is shown to centralized authority. With but a few exceptions, provincial legislators and their Ministries are remote and positively viewed. [Some provincial "types" might wish that adults regarded them so upbeatly.]

Most of our essayist population would concur with Swanson that a second actor, the teaching professional, is the most qualified to make decisions concerning the organization and administration of educational services. Yet rather than talking about efficiencies gained by so mobilizing teachers, student essayists deferentially speak in terms such a "The Board should not take advantage of and push teachers around," "Teachers alone are capable of dealing with classroom problems," and "Teachers have a right to decide which subjects they are capable of teaching and which they should refuse to teach." Although the young essayists do not put their minds to it expressly, from such claims as these, a case of sorts could be made for teacher empowerment and school-based management.

As a third actor in governance, Swanson postulates the family to be "the preferred spokesman for the child's welfare." Only a few of the young Ontarians see their parents in that role. This handful is earnest, suggesting that "Parents should decide what courses their children should take" and "Parents should receive regular phone calls that update them on the progress of the student, whether or not the student is doing well." Yet the emphatic majority do not write, even in passing, about their mothers and fathers anywhere being involved in the schooling process. That the young are not proponents of some sort of "Parents' Charter" is hardly revelatory, for a subtext of many essays seems to be that adolescence is a time to work on establishing one's own identity, individuality, and intimacies – quite apart from parental control.

Implicitly a third of the essayists appear to imply, by their comments on the formal and informal curriculum, that Swanson is overlooking a fourth vital actor in school improving, the Learners themselves. According to about a quarter of our sample, students deserve a voice in determining what they are expected to learn. "To reduce the possibility of being ripped off," many of the students offer curricular suggestions that revolve around the practicalities of life after school (when they say they have to know about parenting, furnishing apartments, doing tax returns, following birth control techniques, filling out marriage certificates and divorce papers, and performing the Heimlich manoeuvre). A couple of essayists call for students not only to take part in course evaluation but to participate in staff meetings as well as the hiring and firing of teachers.

School improvement and student empowerment may be nebulous ideas to some, but one student is quite clear about their connection:

> *With all due respect to many of our professional educators, spending class time discussing the latest escapades of the Toronto Maple Leafs or having the*

> *students focus their bleary eyes upon the faithful VCR time and time again is not good pedagogy. If the administration and counselling department acknowledge such problems and encourage students and teachers to work towards solutions or compromises, many conflicts will be eliminated.*

To help eliminate such conflicts, schools lately have adapted codes of behaviour that spell out requirements for attendance, punctuality, access to school areas, and respect for others.

Perhaps in reaction to those behavioural codes, two dozen essayists want more student freedom and assumption of adult prerogatives – or what Swanson would call liberty (although he does not discuss liberty as a student prerogative; evidently for Swanson, primarily liberty is a good for parents, as they choose which school their children will attend). "Students who are interested and capable," one adolescent announces, "should be given the chance to examine and comment upon majority policy changes with the school." This aspiration goes beyond service on student councils which are "just for raising money and activity days." Should students serve on a school's board of governors, then, it appears they might pump for less detailed, less prescriptive, and less binding surveillance and Catch-22 routines. One writes:

> *We are belittled for smoking in the washroom, eating in the hall, kissing one's girlfriend, dressing inappropriately, coming into class just as the bell finishes, wandering with no specific destination, painting the sky purple, spouting too many socialist theories.*

All in all, the regulated milieu can be deadeningly impersonal and "robotic." More volition and selfhood is on the agenda:

> *The student body turns into zombies, mesmerized by the bonging of the bell. Bong – be seated for the first class, bong – find your seat and sit down, class now begins, bong – stand and walk to your locker, exchange books for brown-bagged lunch and head to cafeteria in an orderly fashion, bong – the process ever so ritual . . . being [so] automated goes against preparing students [for later life].*
>
> *If we participated more in organizing the school, there would be no more complaints because we would be involved in making the rules.*

Students thus remind us of John Dewey's old point, one that Swanson underplays: teaching and learning are social activities, success or failure depending upon human relations and how they are handled.

Equality and Fraternity. Related to the liberty themes above is Swanson's highlighting of equality and fraternity issues for schools of the 90s. In occasional references to distributions of authority, several learners do insist on equality and fraternity – for themselves, e.g.,

> *We should adapt the teaching methods of Quebec. For instance, in Quebec, it is not mandatory for the students to call their teachers by formal names but rather by their first name which is acceptable in the adult world. By using*

> *this method, the classroom can be transformed into an easy-going, mature discussion room where everyone feels equal and unstifled.*

Roughly about 20% of the essayists hold that the teacher should not be on a pedestal to students, but rather than bespeaking a contra-culture, theirs is a plea to mesh youth and adult realms. Not discussed are the niceties of an unstated "gentleman's agreement" that may exist between the generations, whereby each cohort gives the other space to breathe and manoeuvre.

Of course, equity issues themselves – not just the question of which mechanisms or processes are suitable for deciding equity matters – catch the essayists' attention, none more so than academic destreaming or detracking, a recent initiative of the Ontario government. Almost 30 write on this topic, about half of that number resisted this provincial government's abolition of Advanced, General, and Basic streams in grade 9. Sometimes the resisters use the language of progressive education, implying that equity is facilitated by teaching assorted youth differently or (more commonly) claiming that destreaming does not "meet the needs of students," either those university-bound or those interested in basic–technical education. On the opposite side of this issue, a terse-writing male and a more voluble female essayist comment on how the previous streaming practices hemmed in adolescents, robbing them of the confidence to "better" or to diversify themselves:

> *A student stuck in Basic level realizes that the other students consider him stupid, and so due to his low confidence, he lives up to that realization.*
>
> *A typical school day. The Advanced students are all in grey, toting around their university catalogs (although some of them have yet to hit puberty) and sneering at those beneath them. The General students wander about, wearing the eversomuch more fashionable green, talking in audible whispers about a party on Friday. The Basic pupils stomp about in large boots, appearing somewhat otherworldly and threatening anyone who looks at them sideways. Naturally, segregation is one of the major instruments of social stability.*

Thus these last two students picturesquely point out how schools' curricular structures can be part of the complex calculus of status-attribution in schools. Indeed, this attribution process does not result simply from objective talents and characteristics, a point not nibbled at by Swanson, Stewart, Riessman, Rist, or Cibulka.

Like these academics, our student essayists do not dwell on curriculum as a focal point for equity. Inclusiveness is a pivotal concern, however, among Ontario students cited in the Royal Commission on Learning's Working Paper (1994). In briefs to the Commission, various student associations are more explicit in claiming: (1) the formal curriculum does not sufficiently reflect the diversity of heritage among Ontario's ethnic groups, (2) the views of working-class people, women, Natives, gays, and lesbians are under-represented, and (3) standardized testing is flawed by cultural, gender, and political bias.

Feeling that they have: (1) missed out on courses offered in large schools, (2) been short-changed in portables, overcrowded classes, and rooms that are "windowless, colorless, and artless" and (3) forgone physical plants available in other regions, several young essayists press for an end to imbalances. Strictly in a grammatical sense, another essayist may not perfectly match her parallel constructions about disparity, but this northern Ontarian does bespeak chagrin:

> *One thing that Ontario high schools are not, is equitable. At one, the swim team practices in the mud puddles, the auto mechanics course takes place in the parking lot, and one of the teachers on spare is pretending to be a guidance counsellor when all that is on his mind is the new coffee maker in the staff room. Contrarily, at another school the cafeteria is never more than half-full [students have better places to be], students know what courses they will need in the future, and the art facilities are nothing short of magnificent.*

Sometimes, too, inequities loom even with students in other countries and, as the next quote illustrates, reflect an angst best-known to adolescents about a classic locus of youth culture and one of their "ought-to-be" golden times:

> *The school prom is an event that bears utmost significance to the average teen. Our friends south of the border truly have a great advantage over us. They can look back upon that specially cherished night, the bonding of the timeless foundation of a school with the blooming, fragile lives of ambitious youth in a night of magic and wonder, while we [Ontarians] have to walk in shame, left only with wishing for such a time. Our teachers say we have a prom but we know better: ours is not a real high school prom.*

Finally, in the name of equity, it would appear that school toilets must be improved. Here again the adult reader, perhaps expecting an edifying treatment of how the equal treatment of unequals is itself unequal, may demur at our content, this time finding our discussion is too particular, too mundane. However, since students live with particulars, as many as a dozen are vexed enough about those facilities to complain about them in their essays, one saying that conditions in student washrooms "imply that they are not contained in the school blueprint and, to the administration's knowledge, do not even exist." According to another, it is "unfair" that faculty bathrooms are "better, with mirrors, soap, sufficient rolls of toilet paper, sinks that function, and absences of line-ups." The reader may wonder, though: how does this student know that much about the faculty's toilets?

Rist's Holism Is Not Key To Students' Essays

Rist makes several holistic statements within the first of his three strands. Over the past decade while the U.S. has been declining in productivity, public institutions have been losing their capacities to solve pressing troubles. As the economic base has dwindled, schools have been hurt: since 1979, a 14% reduction in U.S. federal support has been one depressant. Thanks to such "myopic" policies, the most affected have been the poor – they "have suffered from budget cuts and the elimination of programs in far greater proportion than have those in middle and upper-income brackets." By Rist's estimate of the U.S., only one federal dollar in five now goes to those in poverty, and consequently "government handouts to those who do not need them [i.e., the well-off] draw valuable and scarce dollars away from education."

For their part, the Ontario student essayists all lack Rist's large macro view (from Washington, a seat of power and of statistical data bases) of how national data on productivity declines interact with diminishing levels of investment in education. Having ready access to officialdom's numbers evidently is not a resource of the students, for neither do any of them retrieve percentages of government reductions in educational funding such as their province has experienced recently. That the "haves" might be in line for entitlement ahead of the "have nots" also does not surface as a crisis for any of our adolescents.

A second of Rist's strands is that far too much attention is being given in academic journals to policy implementation, presumably including school-improvement schemes. Honouring the concern of elected officials who would link funding to measurable educational results that a discontented public would accept, Rist laments (1) an over-supply of explanatory or descriptive research about how to implement programs and (2) a dearth of problem-finding research about outcomes. Rist's inclination is to reduce the number of studies that focus on techniques for better bringing in new practices; he would increase the quantity and quality of hard-nosed judgments about policy outcomes. Questions would be answered on: What did the students actually learn? With what effectiveness and at what cost? Is the program biased toward the rich or towards the poor?

The young essayists evince no disposition toward studies on policy implementation in schools; possibly, these young writers are not "into" the reading of academic journals. Yet, more or less echoing Rist's critical stance and his earlier concern for "have nots," certain young Ontarians do have a micro and a vividly judgmental stance toward program outcomes. As suggested by four of their diverse and short assessments of consequences, certain programs are being starved and access to particular spaces unreasonably is being denied:

> *Often it's the sports department that gets the new money. The music department has 20-year old broken instruments . . . [and] many courses cannot be thoroughly taught due to a lack of current texts, but at least the football team looks good.*
>
> *The absence of comfortable seating areas forces students to spend any spare time they may have wandering aimlessly around the halls. Someone needs to correct that situation, fast.*
>
> *Restrictions forbid students to be present near the front entrance of the school because that is where the visitors arrive. This restriction portrays, to students, the negative idea that they make bad impressions upon visitors.*
>
> *Math and sciences are being pushed on us, but the course selections are a little skimpy on technology. . . . Environmental studies, arts courses . . . [and] extra-curricular activities aren't as available as they were when my brother went here . . .*

Now, even if Rist were to have his way, with (1) less research being conducted about the niceties of the implementation process, (2) fewer studies being completed of a "this-is-how-we-make-do" nature, and (3) more stern, outcome-oriented research being undertaken, we wonder if adult evaluators would have picked up quite the same sort of saucy perceptions about budgets, seatings, front entrances, and older brothers' range of learning opportunities.

Third among Rist's strands is a refusal to dichotomize domestic and foreign problems. Instead, he argues that his country's internal and external concerns should be treated as interdependent. "It makes no sense to reduce the number of foreign graduate students allowed to enter our science programs if we fail to train our own [elementary, high school, and college] students so that they could compete without protectionist quotas." Rist is stingy on giving other educational or social service examples of the sorts of foreign-domestic interdependencies he values for the U.S., but (being Canadian nationalists) we easily can imagine a linkage between, say, Canada's upsetment over acid rain from the U.S. (something of an external problem for Washington) and America's efforts to promote curricula for environmental studies (an internal problem if the U.S.'s sorry record in pollution control is to be fairly taught). In a more everyday internal-external dichotomy, we can imagine a link between violence out in school yards and atmospheres within schoolhouses that encroach upon readiness for learning.

A trend toward an integrating world economy and toward interconnectedness among complex systems *is* commented upon by several environmentally-conscious students: they write about the biosphere and advances in technology that promote travel around the globe. Even so, the core of Rist's third point, that treating overseas problems as separate and distinct from domestic problems in education, is not ever made directly – as the fusion might have been made 20 years by American students relating their government's expenditures on Vietnam shortfalls in the Operation Head Start, part of the Kennedy and Johnson Administration's War on Poverty against the inadequacies of inner-city education. Nevertheless, in recognizing the importance of multi-culturalism and of the Pacific rim to North America's interests, about a dozen essayists do at least start to invoke a portion of the linkage that Rist values. One of the more full-bodied invocations:

> *During my stay in Asia, I realized how much the Ontario school system had failed me by not exposing me to any detailed study of the history, politics, or religion of the Far East. After seeing Bangkok and the industry of its people, I know it won't be long before Bangkok is the Hong Kong or Tokyo of tomorrow. To have a guide in China that says she will have "one party dress for life" and who has not the freedom to travel the 50 miles by hydrofoil to Hong Kong leaves one with a desperate desire to know more so that when help can be given, one is ready. To sit on a plane by a New York businessman, not ten years older than myself, who makes his living travelling all over the Far East selling blue jeans, makes me aware of the business opportunities that are about to unfold in Asia. However, if thanks to a lack of education in Ontario, I cannot understand the people, their culture, their politics, and hence their way of doing business, how can I be expected to compete and make a success of myself with this new force in Asia?*

Here again the languages of the academic and the student differ markedly. All the same, the academic might conclude that this particular North York student had taken a credible, far-sighted view. Somewhat "into globalization," the young essayist has linked his country's domestic programs in education to the need to prosper overseas, and without technocratic reliance on those protectionist quotas that Rist mentioned earlier.

Students' and Cibluka's Policy Options

Charter schools, workplace schools, community-based organizations, and other alternatives discussed by Cibulka (chapter 1) are the ideas of those policy entrepreneurs who would move education in fresh directions. These organizational formats are not the stuff of our student essays, nor is it common for the Ontario essayists to reflect, as Cibulka does, on the decline of families and the erosion of functionally cohesive communities. But in suggesting reasons behind the decline of a professional–technical model of school–community relations, Cibulka does point to two forces that some student essayists also warm to.

To reprise earlier quotes, one force "out there" is a sharp questioning of professional educators. Scores of teachers are affectionately recalled, but several dozen of their peers are faulted for curricula that are un-modern and methods that are inappropriate. How "expert" is it one essayist wonders, for a third of class time to be spent in taking down notes off the chalk board? Some teachers are burned-out or apathethic, not fighting for superior learning conditions. Many educators are said to be unequipped to deal with violence and racism, pretending that it does not exist in their schools. For any reason, "If you're unhappy in your teaching career," one student concludes after a tale of a burnt-out adult, "rest assured your students will be unhappy in your classroom too." At times, students do attach blame to fellow-students – "You do realize I could get shot for writing this," a young woman in eastern Ontario writes, "but many students are insolent, crass, bratty, over-confident." Ultimately, however, professional educators are criticized for not motivating students to make more of themselves, for being poorly organized, for failing to exact hard fines for disruption, for not gearing sports to everyone except an athletic few, for not having "someone exciting to read our morning announcements, someone loud, someone loved, [someone like] Ernie Harwell." Finally in this regard, "If I ran this school," one more essayist differs from his principal, "I wouldn't go overboard to please students." So, while valuing more school spirit and *joie de vivre* (not entirely a professional responsibility), many students do seem to want what only professionals can offer, stricter as well as more exciting styles of teaching.

Also surfacing in the students' essays is a bit of the distrust of, or the limited pride in, large institutions that Cibulka attributes to undercutting the professional technical model of school–community relations. Several condemn for instance, the difficulty of changing tedious school-wide timetables or of getting student voices heard at the Board level. "The walls of the classroom symbolize restrictions, boundaries that infringe on my freedom to learn," one cosmpolitan essayist writes in favor of schools with less compartmentalized and more community-centred learnings. The flavor of other students' alienation or resignationism towards stubborn institutions is captured in this extract:

> *In my attempts to discover a [lunchtime] place in which I can find peace and quiet, I am constantly left to roam the hallways. . . . One begins to wonder if the school has purposely set out to antagonize its students and minimize their interest in accomplishing their studies. . . . If I ran this school, I would develop a study area that provides desks and chairs and even (why not?)*

> *windows. It would be an area where students could eat,or snack, while being academically productive in some manner [Italics in original] . . . I feel that the school is not propelling itself to search for new ways in which to stimulate students into studying more often and more consistently.*

Given that schools propel adolescents to use their minds well, why shouldn't secondary students be active participants, as active anyway as busybody academics, in dialogues about improving their own academic productivities?

Shared Context, Some Shared Language

> *For insiders, language becomes a chief key to the taste socialization and mood currents that are prevalent in this [youth] group at any moment. For outsiders, including adult observers, language becomes a mysterious opacity, constantly carrying peer-group messages which are full of precisions that remain untranslatable.*
>
> David Riesman, et al., *The Lonely Crowd*

In keeping with David Riesman's view that the data which can best reveal the character of the youth culture are linguistic, we have glimpsed some 17- and 18-year olds' depictions of what they reject and desire for education. However, contrary to David Riesman's notion that the significance of adolescent life is partially hidden from adults by semantic devices, we can now maintain that where school improvement is the topic, elders can find these students' language quite accessible. Youth culture may be genuinely independent in music, dress, prestige hierarchies, behaviours that reflect sex-role identities, and other cultural and interpersonal currents; to discover their individual talents, adolescents may need license to be foolish and exempt from adult perspectives . . . but when it comes to improving schools, elements of this age-grade appear to *want* adults to understand their meanings.

Our data suggest that young essayists can transform with aplomb a writing task on a subject like "How can Ontario education be improved?" into socially adaptive reflections. Many can juxtapose the particular with the general, the immediate with the remote, the affective with the cognitive. And as the above excerpts from their essays are meant to indicate, a fair number of these young people write soundly – and with a panache that we have not seen in the language of older Canadian school politicians (Townsend, 1988) or in literary styles of other school reformers. Their constructive and critical language about the dailiness of studenting is, then, intelligible and translatable: when given a chance to communicate about needed school improvements, elements of the adolescent subculture in our part of North America do not appear insulated or overly self-contained.

Our sorting of ideas from 650 essays by Ontario high-school seniors reveals overlap in dispositions with writings of five academics also writing on the process and product of school improvement. Currents of dissatisfaction and reform zeal appear to run deep with members of both groups, especially in matters of curriculum. For a part of the time, in pretty much of one voice, Professor Stewart and the student essayist champion active, personalized, in-depth, and service learnings. That professor and those adolescents also see common pedagogical virtues and defects in teachers and teaching. That students can help each other in tutoring, a Frank

Riessman cause, is not a student emphasis, however. Instead, young people in our population appear guided by expectations for school improvement that partially match those of our three other scholars, Swanson (with his policy objectives of liberty, equality, and fraternity), Rist (especially with his drive for sharply assessing programs), and Cibulka (with, among other points, his understandings of the limits of professional expertise). Importantly, for these five academics who use footnotes to cite peers in other countries and for close to a tenth of the student essayists, the concept of the "global village" no longer seems purely theoretical – it is real.

If the youth culture does reflect certain academic or adult conceptions of the desirable education, we should appreciate that school improvement is a semantic domain occupied by young and old only up to a point. Meanings vary between the adolescent and the academic over, for example, the role of the teacher. To summarize, students seem prepared to extend respect when the teacher's humanity and vulnerability are revealed. Maybe a sixth of the essayists want the opportunity for more contact between themselves and educators, but several do not necessarily expect much from guidance counsellors. The dignity of the individual student is emphasized by young essayists with recommendations such as "Don't rush to judgment. Suspend us *after* our formal appeal, not before." For their part, and to our surprise, the five professors do not especially advocate providing greater volition for students. In that, they may resemble those educators who hear students' opinions but don't take them into serious consideration.

While we appreciate that these five professors do not believe in giving students what students want just because students want it, we assert that such academics do have a responsibility to face up to an imperative of the continent's youth culture for the past 50 years, that students control much of the informal part of their lives (Modell, 1989). Thus, as part of their scanning of the environment and their working-out of implications of their ideas, professors could afford to ponder their reform proposals in the light of the trend toward greater volition and slack for adolescents. For example, if Stewart's and Frank Riessman's curricular suggestions do not reflect the trend toward great selfhood among the young, are there aspects of these academics' hopes for multi-faceted marking and for the teaching of cooperation that might benefit from rethinking – or at least from re-interpreting to students?

Surely responsibility for attentiveness does not lie entirely with academics, however. On top of their other challenges, school officials may not welcome the additional charge we are about to lay on them, but leadership of course does require exertion (as well as anguish), and our thought is that school officials could stimulate their students towards being more directly aware of (1) the policy objective of efficiency in schools (Swanson's concern) and (2) how entitlements for the haves tend to deprive the have-nots (Rist's focus). Put another way, educators might work to reduce the gap that exists in selected students' consciousness about certain school reforms. For an example, we could build upon an idea that one 17-year-old Ontarian put forward: that an Issues course be established *for* high-schoolers, (planned) *by* high-schoolers (a year before themselves taking such a class), and (here is where our suggestion comes in) also partially *about* high-schoolers. Now if selected academics' visions of school-improvement could indeed be part of such youngsters' agendas for deliberation, perhaps gradually some bridging of academic and youth views about education might begin to ensue.

In a host of other ways yet to be imagined, school-improvers' recognition of the young's values might occur, just as adaptations of professorial concerns might become part of the common-sense world of a young generation wanting school improvements. Who knows, in time adolescents might even move to the academics' side as adapters and as political co-proponents. And students might also emerge from the underground to the level of legitimate stakeholders in collaborative solutions.

Notes

For helpful comments on a draft version, the authors are much obliged to Collen Capper.

1. From 1989 to 1993, through *Orbit*, a quarterly of OISE edited by Heather Berkeley and through announcements mailed to English department heads at all high schools in Ontario, seniors were invited to vie for the title of Young Essayist. Topics over the years included: "Great Moments in Learning", "What Grade For Your Schools?", "If I Were Principal", and "How Can Ontario Education Be Improved?" *In their own way, our scribes address the notion of school improvement.*

   Granted, this procedure for collecting data skews our population sample towards young people who feel confident in their language and writing skills. They may include the "brains" or "out-of-its" in student bodies, and those statuses may isolate our essayists from understanding outlooks of peers with different identities and perspectives. Also, not knowing the races, ethnic origins, and socio-economic statuses of these essayists, we must acknowledge that this population may very well not conform to demographic tendencies of any specific jurisdiction. Additional non-representativeness stems from slightly more males than females submitting essays and from more urban and suburban residents participating in our contest than small-town and rural youth. By way of further limitation, adolescents in our population seem to have successfully internalized adult occupational goals – when it came up in essays, a high-school diploma and even post-secondary study were not questioned as minimal requirements for half-decent jobs. Finally, intuiting that the contest judges would be adult, probably the essayists used language that would 'get through' to an older generation, perhaps more so than if they were communicating only among peers. All the same, even if these students are not members of North America's "typical" classes of the '90s addressing each other, *and* even if their essays are blunt instruments for dissecting subtleties, we hold that these essays are of interest. Students' memories of earlier school lives may be imperfect, but at least the essayists can attest to how things are now.

   Curiously, members of youth cultures may not talk or write about matters of vital interest. For instance, few of our essayists dwell upon what many regard as the Number One problem in North American schools, youths' buying and consuming drugs. Also almost overlooked in the 650 essays is another matter of peak significance to society, the high rate of student dropouts from secondary schools. Conceivably, our adolescents find these problems too awesome to even begin to tackle, or – worse yet – perhaps drug-dealing and dropping-out are seen as relatively enduring features of school realities.

2. By only matching the notions of scholars to those of students, we lose certain perceptions from our population of 17- and 18-year olds. That is, had we treated the student data first

through the grounded-theory approach to thematic analysis, we might have mapped constructions of the student as hero, the teacher as compulsive, the school as MuchMusic, the society as stressed, and so on. Alternatively too, had we wanted to critique the young as well as their educators, we could have cited certain essays by way of starting to build a case that the curriculum is failing to produce students who write discriminatingly. At the same time, we might have treated other regrets of ours, e.g., at least a seventh of these students apparently have not yet learned to conquer their feelings of (confessed) boredom, some essayists value the brotherhood of the young so exclusively that they seem to forget how schools as institutions legitimately embody adult interests too. But such an inductive mapping and critique are less our objective than a straight-forward rendering of outlooks among 650 essayists and 5 academics. Finally, it bears mentioning that the U.S. and Canada each face a set of educational problems more or less special for its own circumstances, but since as far as we know, (1) the two nations do share a push for school improvement through rather similar structures, and (2) the similarity between American and Canadian student responses in rating the educational enterprise can do "away with any reasons to distinguish between replies on grounds of nationality" (Kuzsman, 1991), in what follows we de-emphasize the differences.

3. At about the same time, a slew of other academic reformers also were taking stock of high schools (e.g. Cetron and Gayle, 1989; Crabbs, 1989; Dunne, 1989; Firestone, Fuhrman & Kirst, 1989; Murphy, 1989).

   Assuredly, their ideas are worth attention – but not in this space. Also outside the scope of this report are scholars' accounts of contemporary students; images of the dullness-irrelevance-frustration of school; one recent overview – with reference to "mean" teachers and dislikeable principals – is Kuzsman (1991).

References

Anderson, G. & K. Herr (1993) The micro-politics of student voices: Moving from diversity of bodies to diversity of voices is schools. In C. Marshall (Ed.), *The Politics of Race and Gender.* New York: Falmer Press.

Cetron, M. & M. Gayle (1990) Educational renaissance. *The Futurist* (September/October), 33-40.

Cibulka, J. (1994) Policy options for building school–community relations, Chapter 1 of Lawton, S. (Ed.) *Education and the Collaborative Solution*, Toronto: OISE Press.

Crabbs, M. (1989) Future perfect: Planning for the next century. *Elementary School Guidance and Counselling*, 24, 160-167.

Dunne, F. (1989) From calculus to general hospital: The preparation of America's undergraduates. *Harvard School of Education Alumni Review*, 9-11.

Firestone, W. Fuhrman, S. & Kirst, M. (1990) Implementation effects of state education reform in the '80s. *NASSP Bulletin* (February), 75-81.

Kuzsman, F. (1991) Thumbs up, thumbs down: North American students rate the system. *Canadian School Executive*, 11(5) (November), 15-18.

Modell, J. (1989) *Into One's Own: From Youth to Adulthood in the United States, 1920-1975.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Murphy, J. (1989) Educational reform in the 1980s: Explaining some suprising successes. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 11(3) (Fall), 204-221.

Ontario Royal Commission on Learning (1994) *Students Talk About Their Schools*, Working Paper. Toronto.

Parker, S. & Case, K. (1994) Student voices – taking charge, making change: Who owns my education? Paper presented at annual convention of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans.

Riesman, D., et al. (1973) *The Lonely Crowd*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Riessman, F. (1990) Restructuring help: A human services paradigm for the 1990s. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 18(2) 221-231.

Rist, R. (1989) Whither policy for the 1990s: Declining options/increasing needs. *Society* (September/October), 39-45.

Slavin, R. (1990) *Cooperative learning: theory, research and practice*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall.

Swanson, A. (1989) Restructuring educational governance: A challenge of the 1990s, *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 25:(3) (August), 268-293.

Stewart, W. (1990) Secondary school imperatives for the '90s: Strategies to achieve reform. *NASSP Bulletin* (March), 70-74.

Townsend, R. (1988) *They Politick for Schools*. Toronto: OISE Press.

Reaching Education's Publics

Norman Robinson, Professor Emeritus
Simon Fraser University

School–Community Relations

This paper deals with the topic of good school–community relations and their importance. For most of the past three decades my research efforts have been focused on the dynamics of school–community interaction. This research, undertaken by me and my students, has led me to the conclusion that effective programs of school–community relations have three components: communication, involvement and marketing. It is necessary for schools and school districts to have (1) effective programs of communication with the communities they serve, (2) suitable programs for the involvement of the community in schools and (3) good marketing plans for schools in their communities.

First, close communication with the community and involvement of the community facilitates the development of shared goals between schools and their communities. The development of shared goals helps to build strong public support for the public schools. Second, effective communication and involvement programs provide citizens with information about schools and thus enable them to make informed judgements about the effectiveness of the schools. Third, close communication and involvement with communities enables schools to better understand the needs and expectations of communities as they relate to education.

Quality of School–Community Relations and Support for Schools

To illustrate how school–community relations are related to support for schools I make reference to studies done over 20 years ago by me (Robinson, 1971) and by one of my students (Watkins, 1972). At that time, in British Columbia, the provincial government had placed limitations on the taxing authority of school boards. Each school district had a provincially-approved budget level. If a school board for a district wanted to spend more than the provincially-approved level, it could pass a by-law approving a budget overage and at the same time authorize a tax levy to cover the overage. If at least 100 voters in the school district challenged the budget overage, the tax levy had to be submitted in a referendum to the voters of the district (Challenged District). If the tax levy was approved by the voters, it became law; if rejected, the budget overage would be disallowed. On the other hand, if less than 100 voters in the school district challenged the budget overage (Unchallenged District), the by-law stood and the necessary tax levy could be made. Of the 75 school districts in B.C. there were 22 districts with budget overages in 1972, 14 Unchallenged Districts and 8 Challenged Districts. Watkins, in comparing the state of school–community relations in the Unchallenged and the Challenged Districts, found that school–community relations were significantly better in the Unchallenged Districts as compared to the Challenged Districts.

Subpublics in Educational Opinion

In 1984 two of my students conducted studies of public opinion in two school districts: Coquitlam, a suburb of Vancouver (Speight, 1984) and Courtenay, on north-central Vancouver Island (Kerr, 1984). Respondents in both studies were asked: "Do you support or oppose the provincial government reductions of financial support for the public school system?" Results from Courtenay (Table 1) indicate that the strongest opposition to financial reductions came from a group of parents who did not have children in the public schools, i.e., parents who only had preschool children. This same result occurred in the Coquitlam School District. In both studies, status with respect to children was analyzed in four ways: (1) parents with children in public schools, (2) parents with only preschool children, (3) parents whose children have finished school and (4) non-parents.

Table 1. **Survey of Public Attitudes Toward Education in Courtenay** (Kerr, 1984)

Do you support or oppose the provincial government reductions of financial support for the public school system? (n = 282)

	%
Support	
Parents with children in public school	31.9
Parents with preschool children only	31.6
Parents whose children have finished school	57.4
Non-parents	29.0
Oppose	
Parents with children in public school	63.7
Parents with preschool children only	68.4
Parents whose children have finished school	42.4
Non-parents	54.8

In a study conducted for the *Vancouver Province* (Robinson, 1985), I examined the question of status with respect to children. Respondents were divided into six groups: (1) parents with children in public schools, (2) parents with children in private schools, (3) parents with only preschool children, (4) parents whose children have finished school, (5) non-parents under 40 years of age and (6) non-parents over 40 years of age. Respondents were asked: "Provincial restraint, as it affects education, has it (1) gone too far, (2) far enough or (3) not far enough?" The results of this study supported the results of the Speight and Kerr studies (1984). The group most opposed to cutbacks in finances for education was parents with preschool children; the next group most opposed to financial reductions were non-parents under 40 years of age, followed by parents with children in the public schools (Table 2). These observations led me to conclude that there are six subpublics in education whoseopinion can be categorized into two groups. The first group, the Present Consumer/Potential Consumer Group, includes parents who have children in the public schools, parents with only preschool children, and non-parents under the age of 40. The second group, the Past Consumer/Non-Consumer Group, includes parents whose children have finished school, parents whose children attend private schools, and non-parents over the age of 40.

Table 2. **The *Vancouver Province* Survey (1985)**

Provincial restraints as it affects education, has gone: (n = 3,825)

	Too Far	Far Enough	Not Far Enough
Pre-school children only	73%	15%	12%
No children (under 40)	69%	23%	9%
Children in public school	54%	31%	15%
No children (over 40)	39%	29%	35%
Children finished school	35%	30%	35%
Children in private school	33%	31%	37%

Differences in Opinions Among the Subpublics

In the studies conducted in Coquitlam (Speight, 1984) and in Courtenay (Kerr, 1984) respondents were asked: "As you look back on your elementary and secondary school education, is it your impression that children today get a better or worse education than you did?" In Coquitlam and in Courtenay (Table 3) the group with the least favorable opinion of schools today was that of parents with only preschool children. (Other differences of opinion on educational issues are referred to later in this paper.)

Table 3. **Attitudes Toward Education**

As you look back on your elementary and secondary education, it is your impression that children today get a better or worse education than you did?

	Coquitlam (n = 214)	Courtenay (n = 282)
Better		
Parents with children in public school	53.0%	51.4%
Parents with only preschool children	33.3%	26.9%
Parents whose children have finished school	59.1%	50.0%
Non-parents	20.8%	38.8%
Worse		
Parents with children in public school	23.8%	17.8%
Parents with only preschool children	27.2%	36.8%
Parents whose children have finished school	26.2%	31.2%
Non-parents	37.8%	38.7%

Effective Communication with Parents

In 1983, a graduate student and I conducted a study of school-home communication in Abbotsford, B.C. (Cattermole & Robinson, 1985); this study was a replication of a study conducted in Toledo, Ohio (Sloan, 1973). In terms of school district characteristics, Abbotsford is a rural, agriculture-based school district; Toledo is an urban, industry-based school district.

With respect to school-home communication, the following information was elicited: (1) what are the actual ways in which parents learn about their child's school, (2) what are the preferred ways by which parents would learn about their child's school, and (3) in the opinion of parents, what are their best ways to communicate with their child's school.

Table 4 lists, in order of importance, the ways parents learn about their child's school and the preferred ways in which parents would like to learn about their child's school. Essentially, parents like information that comes to them directly from the schools – through their children, their children's teachers, report cards or the school newsletter.

Table 4. **Parents' Actual and Preferred Ways of Learing About their Children's Schools in Abbotsford** (n = 215)

Method	Actual %*	Rank	Preferred %*	Rank
What my child tells me	89	1	78	1
My child's report card	80	2	57	3
School newsletter	77	3	67	2
Parent/teacher conference	63	4	54	4
Personal visit to school	57	5	49	5
Teacher notes/phone calls	52	6	**35	6
Conversations with friends/neighbors	48	7	21	9
"Meet the teacher" night	42	8	**35	7
School open house	35	9	23	8
Local newspaper	31	10	17	11
Personal friendships with educators in the district	20	11	20	10
School athletic activities	16	12	5	12
What neighbour's child tells me	15	13	5	13
Radio news or talk show	7	14	2	16
Guided tours of school	**4	15	3	15
Other ways	**4	16	4	14

* Percentage of total respondents naming this item as important.

** Due to rounding, the percentages of some pairs of items are the same, though ranks differ.

Table 5 indicates parents' opinions on the most effective ways of communicating with schools in Abbotsford. Parents chose direct, personal contact as the most effective way of communicating with their child's school.

Table 5. **Parents' Opinions on the Most Effective Methods of Communicating with Abbotsford Schools** (n = 215)

Method	%	Rank
Direct approach by phone or in person	89	1
Parent-teacher conference	84	2
Work as school volunteer	61	3
Messages sent with child to school	60	4
Phone calls, notes to school board office or to board members	51	5
Parent interest group, e.g., parents of children with learning disabilities	**47	6
PTA or similar group	**47	7
Informal social meeting, e.g., social meeting with teacher	42	8
Survey issued by school	**41	9
Participation in school activity, e.g., fundraising	**41	10

* Percentage of total respondents naming this item.

** Due to rounding, the percentages of some pairs of items are the same, though ranks differ.

The findings of the Abbotsford study are consistent with the findings of the Toledo study; only minor differences in parent opinion about actual and preferred ways of learning about their child's school occurred in the two studies. The Abbotsford study, involving parents in a different country and a different kind of school district, took place a decade after the Sloan study in Toledo; yet the two studies produced similar results suggesting that parent preferences with regard to home–school communication are remarkably similar and stable.

The findings of the Abbotsford and Toledo studies also suggest that school–home communication can be improved without great financial expenditures. If schools want to communicate more effectively with parents, they have only to develop more fully the traditional modes of school–home communication that rely on direct, personal contact between educators and parents.

Effective Newsletters

The Abbotsford study revealed the importance of the school newsletter for parents. In 1992, one of my graduate students did a study of school newsletters (Hewitt, 1992). Hewitt gave 8 newsletters of varying characteristics to a group of 50 parents, 20 school administrators, and 20 journalists; he asked the three groups to identify the newsletters they liked most and least and to give reasons for their likes and dislikes. The parents, school administrators and journalists were in agreement on which were the best and worst newsletters and why. They judged a good newsletter to be one that is easy to read, pleasant to look at, personal and informal in tone and contains information that is factual, concise and relevant.

The problem is not that effective newsletters are difficult to produce; it is that school administrators do not know how to produce them or do not put forth the effort to produce them. In view of the importance of the newsletter as an effective school to home communication vehicle, this seems to be an unfortunate situation.

Understanding Involvement

Most of what is written about parent involvement in education misses the target because it is based on an assumption that parents want to be involved in decision-making at the school level and that teachers want parents to be involved. In reality, this assumption is false.

The Abbotsford study (Cattermole & Robinson, 1985) examined the extent to which parents wanted to be involved in decision-making in discipline policy, curriculum matters, length of the school day and dealing with their own child's learning problems. Choices for involvement were: (1) No involvement on my part is necessary, (2) I would like to be informed on this matter, (3) I would like to express my opinion on this matter through an opinion poll or survey, (4) I would like to make suggestions or recommendations on this matter at a meeting, (5) I would like to be part of a school–community committee that would recommend decisions on this matter, or (6) I would like to be part of a parent committee making decisions on this matter.

In every area of decision-making except one, the modal response of parents was: "I would like to be informed on this matter." With regard to the learning problems of their child parents wanted to be more actively involved in decision-making. Results of the Abbotsford study suggest that parents are content to let school authorities make the major decisions related to school life; parents only ask that they be kept informed of these decisions.

Do teachers want parents involved in schools? They want parents to be involved as supporters but not as decision-makers. Results of the research of Stallworth (1982) (Tables 6 & 7) suggest that teachers want parents to be involved as supporters of school activities (audience members, volunteer workers) and as supporters of school work (helping the child with homework, learning about ways parents can help the child at school). Teachers, however, are not enthusiastic about parents becoming involved in school decision-making.

Table 6. Teachers' Views on the Usefulness of Involving Parents (n = 873)

Decisions	Means*
Deciding if family problems are affecting school performance	3.884
Providing sex role instruction & sex education	2.986
Choosing classroom discipline	2.810
Setting school discipline guidelines	2.760
Amount of homework assigned	2.648
Emphasizing multicultural education	2.368
Selecting textbooks & other teaching materials	2.349
Evaluating pupil performance	2.337
Grouping of children for instruction	2.325
Deciding priorities for school budget	2.262
Setting guidelines for grading students	2.075
Selecting teaching methods	1.980
Evaluating teacher performance	1.947
Hiring/firing school staff	1.508
Making assignments of teachers in school	1.486

* Using a five point scale from 1 to 5 (not useful to very useful). Source: Stallworth, J. (March 1982). *Identifying barriers to parent involvement in the school: A survey of educators.*

Table 7. Teachers' Views of the Most Important Parent Involvement Roles (n = 873)

Roles (in order of rank)	Means *
Audience for school activities	4.242
School program volunteer	4.212
Home tutor for children	3.858
Co-learner (parent participation – learning about education with teachers, students)	3.651
Paid school staff	3.202
Advocate (i.e., activist role regarding school policies)	3.104
Decision-making (partners in school planning, curriculum)	2.407

* Using a five point scale from 1 to 5 (not useful to very useful). Source: Stallworth, J. (March 1982). *Identifying barriers to parent involvement in the school: A survey of educators.*

Education's Subpublics and Willingness to Support the Public Schools Financially

In 1987 I was approached by the West Vancouver Teachers' Association to conduct a public opinion survey in the West Vancouver School District. They wanted to know public opinion about increased taxes for public schools, having been told by the school board that the public was totally opposed to higher property taxes for education.

A random telephone poll of 353 West Vancouver residents was conducted (Robinson, 1987; 1988): 44.7% were willing to pay higher property taxes to support the public schools; 33% did not want to pay higher taxes; 19.5% were undecided; 2.8% had no opinion or did not respond. When the respondents were divided into subpublics, a different pattern emerged (Table 8). A majority of respondents in all three subpublics in the Present Consumer/Potential Consumer Group were willing to pay higher taxes for schools. In contrast, there was no majority support for a tax increase for schools in the two subpublics surveyed in the Past Consumer/Non-Consumer Group. The results indicate that there are widespread differences among the subpublics in their willingness to support the public schools through increased taxation.

Table 8. Public's Willingness to Pay High Property Taxes to Support Public Education in West Vancouver: Comparison of Present Consumer/Potential Consumer Group to Former Consumer/Non-consumer Group (n = 353)

Present Consumers/Potential Consumers	Yes	Undecided	No	No opinion/ No response
Parents with children in public schools	64.6%	16.7%	16.7%	2.0%
Parents only with preschool children	70.6%	17.6%	11.8%	0.0%
Non-parents under age 40	52.5%	21.3%	21.3%	4.9%
Past Consumers/Non-Consumers				
Parents whose children have finished school	30.0%	16.7%	48.3%	5.0%
Non-parents under age 40	37.9%	16.7%	41.7%	3.7%

(Responses from parents with children in private schools have been omitted as this subpublic was too small in numbers for a meaningful comparison with the other subpublics.)

Sources of Information for Education's Subpublics

In the random poll conducted in West Vancouver, respondents were asked about their sources of information for local schools. Table 9 indicates indirect sources (conversations with friends, radio or television, the local newspaper) are more important sources of information than any direct sources (personal visits to the school, school newsletter, what my child tells me).

Table 9. Public's Actual Ways of Learning About Schools in West Vancouver (n = 353)

Method	Actual % *
Conversations with adult friends/neighbours	68.0
Radio or television	50.2
Local newspaper	46.5
Personal visits to schools	45.6
School newsletter	45.1
Personal friendships with educators in the district	43.7
What my child tells me	42.8
Report cards	41.9
Scheduled parent-teacher conferences	41.4

* Percentage of total respondents naming this item as an important way.

When the respondents were broken down by subpublic, a different pattern emerges (Table 10). For the parents of children in the local public schools, close personal contact with the school (personal visits, what my child tells me) and direct communications from the school (report cards, school newsletter) are the most important information sources. This result is very similar to the result found in the earlier Abbotsford study of home–school communication. As to the other subpublics, parents who only have preschool children rely on the opinions of their friends and neighbours; people who have no children and those whose children have finished school rely primarily on the local newspaper for information.

Table 10. **Sub-public's Actual Ways of Learning About Schools in West Vancouver** (n = 353)

Subpublics	Actual % *
Parents with children in public schools	
Conversations with adult friends/neighbours	93.8
Personal visits to the school	91.7
School newsletter	91.7
What my child tells me	87.5
Parents with only preschool children	
Conversations with adult friends/neighbours	94.1
Local newspaper	58.8
Radio or television	58.8
Personal friendships with educators in the district	58.8
Personal visits to schools	58.8
Parents whose children have finished school	
Local newspaper	81.7
Conversations with adult friends/neighbours	63.3
Radio or television	50.0
Personal friendships with educators in the district	38.8
Non-parents	
Local newspaper	72.7
Conversations with adult friends/neighbours	68.8
Radio or television	64.9
Personal friendships with educators in the district	45.4

In 1988 I conducted a study of public attitudes toward education in Chilliwack, a rural school district in the eastern Fraser Valley, B.C. (Robinson, 1988). As in the West Vancouver study, respondents in the Chilliwack study were asked about their sources of information on the local schools. Results of the Chilliwack study were very similar to those of the West Vancouver study (Tables 11 & 12).

Table 11. **Public's actual ways of learning about schools in Chilliwack** (n = 402)

Method	Actual % *
Local newspaper	75.2
Conversations with adult friends/neighbours	64.2
Radio or television	53.1
School newsletter	46.9
What my child tells me	45.3
Report cards	45.0
Personal friendships with educators in the district	42.9
Personal visits to shcools	42.2
Notes/phone calls from teachers/principal	34.2

* Percentage of total respondents naming this item as an important way.

Table 12. Sub-public's Actual Ways of Learning About Schools in Chilliwack (n = 402)

Subpublics	Actual % *
Parents with children in public schools	
School newsletter	80.4
Conversations with adult friends/neighbours	78.3
Local newspaper	77.2
Report cards	73.9
Parents with only preschool children	
Local newspaper	81.8
Conversations with adult friends/neighbours	69.7
Radio or television	60.6
Personal friendships with educators in the district	54.5
Parents whose children have finished school	
Local newspaper	78.0
Radio or television	60.6
Conversations with adult friends/neighbours	58.7
Personal friendships with educators in the district	35.8
Non-parents	
Local newspaper	75.4
Conversations with adult friends/neighbours	60.8
Radio or television	45.1
Personal friendships with educators in the district	39.1

The results from both studies suggest that different subpublics get their information about local schools from different sources. It seems reasonable to suggest, therefore, that school boards and school administrators must use multiple avenues of communication if they want to reach education's subpublics.

Contact with Public Schools and Rating of the Public Schools

In the West Vancouver study (Robinson, 1987) respondents were asked: "Students are often given a grade of A, B, C, D or F to denote the quality of their work. If the public schools in this community were graded in the same way, what grade would you give them?" This is the same question asked annually in the Phi Delta Kappan polls and one that has been used in the Canadian Education Association (CEA) polls (Canadian Education Association, 1984; Williams, 1990). The results for West Vancouver in 1987 are shown in Table 13. Although comparable Canadian data for this year are not available, the 1987 West Vancouver results do not differ significantly from the overall Canadian results of the 1990 CEA poll (Williams).

Table 13. Grades Given West Vancouver Schools Compared to Grades Given Canadian Schools

West Vancouver Schools (1987) (n = 353)		Canadian Education Association Poll (1990) (n = 2,109)	
A	7.0%	A	6.2%
B	42.3%	B	39.2%
C	33.5%	C	34.5%
D	2.3%	D	7.1%
F	0.9%	F	9.2%
No opinion	14.0%	No opinion	9.2%

Table 14 indicates the ratings that the education subpublics in West Vancouver give their local schools. The subpublic which gives the highest grades to the public schools is the one which has the greatest amount of contact with the public schools, i.e., parents who have children in the public schools. These results suggest that familiarity is associated with positive regarding.

Table 14. Subpublics' Ratings of the Schools in West Vancouver (n = 353)

Subpublic	Mean *
Parents with children in public schools	3.93
Non-parents	3.60
Parents with only preschool children	3.44
Parents whose children have finished school	3.41

* A = 5; B = 4; C = 3; D = 2; F = 1

Parents Evaluation of Schools

There is a big difference in how parents evaluate the school their child attends in comparison to how they evaluate schools in the local district, provincially or nationally. For example, the Kappan polls of public attitudes toward education in the U.S., 1985-1992, indicated that approximately 18% of respondents gave the nation's schools a grade of A or B. In these same years, about 70% of respondents gave the school their eldest child attended a grade of A or B. Similarly, respondents gave schools in the local district lower grades than they gave to the school that their eldest child attended.

In the West Vancouver and Chilliwack studies, I discovered the same difference between the way parents evaluate their child's school as compared to the local district schools as was found in the Kappan polls: parents gave their eldest child's school more favourable ratings than they gave to the local district's schools. What was viewed as a serious problem in the local district's schools was viewed as a less serious problem in the school that the parents' eldest child attended. In the Chilliwack study, for example, the question of how discipline is handled in the schools was probed. Table 15 shows that only 23.9% of the public think that discipline is handled in a "good" or "very good" manner in the local Chilliwack district schools, whereas 73.1% of the parents think that discipline is handled in a "good" or "very good" manner in the school that their eldest child attends.

Table 15. Comparison of How the Public Perceives Discipline is Handled in Chilliwack to How Chilliwack Parents Perceive Discipline is Handled in the School Their Eldest Child Attends

Rating	Public Opinion of Discipline Handling in District's Schools %	Parent Opinion of Discipline Handling in Eldest Child's School %
Very good	4.3	25.0
Good	19.6	48.1
Average	19.9	18.3
Poor	22.7	8.7
Very poor	8.4	0.9
No opinion	25.2	0.0

A Marketing Plan for Schools

If the communication and involvement programs are to succeed in building good school–community relations, an effective plan to market these programs is needed; schools and school districts have to be aggressive in bringing these programs to designated target groups. It is crucial for those groups comprising the 70% plus proportion of the population who do not have children in the public schools to be made aware of these programs. The research done to date on the importance of marketing for schools suggests that passive communication and involvement programs do not do the job of building or keeping good school–community relations. Achilles, Nan Lintz and Wayson (1989) conducted a study of schools which enjoyed high public confidence; they found that these high confidence schools had strong marketing programs for their communication and involvement programs. These schools were proactive in obtaining and holding public confidence by emphasizing two-way communication, needs sensing and feedback and by developing special communication and involvement programs for targeted groups in their communities.

Rating of School Boards

School boards need to improve the public's understanding of the work they do: 38.2% of the public gave the school board in Chilliwack School District a grade of A or B and 4.3% gave it a grade of D or F. Although these results may be encouraging to the school board members, it is discouraging that 35.7% of the public has no opinion on the performance of the Chilliwack school board. There is a lack of understanding of what and how the school board is doing.

Concluding Comments

In this paper I have reviewed some of the research that my students and I have done over the past 28 years on school–community relations. Our major findings have been:

- The support that schools receive is directly related to the quality of their school–community relations. Schools and school districts with good school–community relations get good financial and moral support from their communities.
- It is not very useful to talk about public opinion and education because there are really six subpublics in education that can be categorized into two main groups.
- Each of the six subpublics has distinct attitudes toward educational issues.
- There are simple and effective ways of communicating with parents that are well within the capabilities of any school.
- School newsletters are vitally important in school–home communication; it is relatively easy to produce a newsletter that parents consider to be useful.
- The question of parent and citizen involvement tends to be misunderstood and most of their involvement programs miss the target.
- There are differences among subpublics in their willingness to support the public schools financially.
- Each of education's six subpublics gets its primary information about schools from different sources.
- The amount of contact that each subpublic has with schools is an important factor in determining how each subpublic rates schools.
- There is a difference in how parents evaluate the school their child attends as compared to the evaluation of schools, as a whole, within the school district.
- Good communication and involvement programs are important for a school but if a school is to command high public confidence, then it must also have a good marketing plan.
- School boards need to do a lot of work on improving their public image, particularly in improving public understanding of their work.

References

Achilles, C., Nan Lintz, M. & Wayson, W. (1989) Observations on building public confidence in education. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis,* 11(3), 275-284.

Canadian Education Association (1984) *Speaking out: The 1984 CEA Poll of Canadian Opinion on Public Education.* Toronto: Canadian Education Association.

Cattermole, N. & Robinson, N. (1985) Effective home-school communication – from the parents' perspective. *Phi Delta Kappan,* 67(1), 48-50.

Hewitt, D. (1992) *Effective School Newsletters: Perspectives of Parents, School Administrators, and Journalists.* Unpublished master's project, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C.

Kerr, H. (1984) *A Survey of Public Opinion on Selected Educational Issues in School District No. 71 (Courtenay).* Unpublished master's project, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C.

Robinson, N. (November 17, 1985) Looking at public opinion on education. *Vancouver Province,* 6-7.

Robinson, N. (1987) *Public Attitudes Toward Education in West Vancouver School District.* A special report prepared for the West Vancouver District Teachers' Association.

Robinson, N. (1988) *Survey of Public Attitudes Toward Education in Chilliwack School District.* A special report to the Board of School Trustees for Chilliwack School District No. 33.

Robinson, N. (October 1971) Voter control of school district expenditures, *The Canadian Administrator,* XI.

Robinson, N. (January 1988) Who supports or opposes spending more on public education? *The Canadian School Executive*, 7(7), 18-21.

Sloan, B. (1973) *School–home Communications*. Educational specialist thesis, University of Toledo.

Speight, G. (1984) *A Survey of Public Attitudes Toward Education in School District No. 43 (Coquitlam)*. Unpublished master's project, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C.

Stallworth, J. (1982) *Identifying Barriers to Parent Involvement in the School: A survey of educators*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Meeting, New York.

Watkins, D. (1972) Critical factors associated with voting on school district by-laws. In Robinson, N. & Elliot, A. (Eds.) *The Politics of Education: Current Issues*. Burnaby, B.C.: Simon Fraser University.

Williams, T. (1990) *Canada's Schools: Report Card for the 1990s*. Toronto: Canadian Education Association.

Stakeholder Attitudes Towards Community Involvement in New Brunswick Schools: Implications for Collaborative Solutions

R. M. McDonald
Marystown Secondary School, Newfoundland

A widely held opinion today is that greater stakeholder involvement in education can lead to improved educational outcomes. The form in which this involvement ought to take place has been variously conceptualized ranging from simple voluntarism, where a parent offers occasional assistance at the neighborhood school, to total community control where the neighborhood schools' staffing, budget and other operations are controlled by a school governing council.

The 1992 Royal Commission on Education in New Brunswick concluded that more stakeholder involvement in education would be beneficial to its school system. In this paper I examine the attitudes of school principals, teachers, parents and school trustees towards wider stakeholder involvement in New Brunswick's anglophone schools. The attitude of these stakeholder groups are potentially helpful in determining if closer school–community partnerships is possible.

Political Factors Relevant to the Study

Reform to the New Brunswick public school system is an important political agenda for the province's majority Liberal government; Premier Frank McKenna is receiving national media attention for his efforts to "lead the public clamor for reform, instead of trying to stall and undermine it" (*Globe and Mail*, February 5, 1993, A22). Mr. McKenna's vision for New Brunswick's economic future appears strongly linked to the school system. The Premier was quoted (*Globe and Mail*, January 16, 1993, B1), "I have absolutely dominating belief that in this chicken-and-egg conundrum of whether you should have jobs or training first, the answer is that you need the training first . . . if you have training, the jobs will take care of themselves." According to this kind of rhetoric, training workers for a knowledge–based economy emerges as the new competitive edge for those living in New Brunswick. As a consequence of an education system responsive to the needs of industry, New Brunswick is given promise of a refurbished national and international image that will ultimately instill confidence within high-tech industry that an appropriately trained and educated labor force lies ready to embrace.

Proposed Reform

On May 7, 1992, the *Report of the Commission on Excellence in Education* was tabled in the New Brunswick Provincial Legislature. The report's title, *Schools for a New Century*, is suggestive of the wide-sweeping educational reform proposed by the document's 42 recommendations. Using the provincial media debate as an indicator, the two most controversial recommendations are: (1) proposing the lengthening of the school year and (2) standardized measurement and evaluation of student learning. Teacher groups, in particular, have lined up in opposition to both proposals. Many of the Commission's resolutions have received relatively little public attention. Recommendations such as providing nutrition programs for children in need, the development of a mission statement and educational goals for the province and for individual schools emerge as items that, at least on the surface, appear to have received tentative acceptance by those engaged in active debate over the Commission's findings. Other recommendations are viewed as lying dormant, tacitly awaiting public scrutiny as the implementation process winds a determined and steady course.

Three of the Commission's recommendations that may fit this *dormant* characterization relate directly to the study in question, i.e., community involvement in the school through the development of school-community partnerships. The first of these recommendations (#35) has to do with creating a means by which students can become more active participants in decisions made regarding what and how they are taught. "It is therefore recommended that the Department of Education assist the school boards in the elaboration of policies and procedures for meaningful participation of students in the operation of their schools." (p. 54) Students, especially at the senior levels, are to "be seen and treated as partners in an enterprise where they have the most to gain or lose".

A second recommendation (#36) pertaining to this current undertaking states:

> *The Commission therefore recommends that, following consultation with the school boards, the New Brunswick Home and School Association, and Le Comité de parents du Nouveau-Brunswick, school advisory committees be prescribed by legislation for each school, and that the Department of Education, also in consultation, develop guidelines for the participation of volunteers in the schools.* (p. 55)

The *Report* indicates that the duties and responsibilities of advisory committees should encompass participation in matters such as the establishment of goals for the school; dialogue and input into curriculum, school rules, discipline matters and the community use of the school; liaison with community, school boards and government; and overseeing volunteers who work in the schools. Through training, the Commission feels that many duties currently the responsibility of the teacher could be performed by competent and caring parents – tasks such as supervision, reading aloud to young children, tutoring, mentoring, counselling or coaching. The Commission recommends that school boards develop accreditation for volunteers working in the schools, complete with volunteer manuals and non-monetary recognition procedures.

The third Commission recommendation (#7) relevant to this study states:

> *To promote sustained province-wide partication of the private sector in the public school system, and to ensure the quality and consistency of the formal activities sponsored, the Commission recommends the creation of a provincial educational collective or compact (which might be called EduCom N.B.).* (p. 56)

The *Report* envisages this proposed collective as a think tank meant to stimulate and disseminate work and technology-related programs throughout the province and to act as a clearing house for information on these projects. The Commission has found a desire on the part of parents, teachers, employers and government to realize in education a more elaborate and sustained business-education partnership.

Purpose of the Study

The focus of this paper is to investigate the attitudes of various stakeholders of influence in the affairs of New Brunswick anglophone public schools towards the involvement of the local community in the everyday operation of the school. The attitudes of principals, teachers, parents and trustees were examined through the use of a questionnaire and implications were drawn as to the future growth of school-community partnerships. The analysis of data was conducted according to demographic factors which accommodated varied and informative comparisons of the attitudes as demonstrated by stakeholders.

If students, parents and businesses are to take on a partnership role with New Brunswick schools to the extent suggested by the *Report*, significant changes can be expected in the way schools operate. Oakes (1992), in discussing the difficulty faced by public education in the implementation of detracking comments on the necessity of addressing the normative dimensions surrounding any proposed change in the educational process. She supports Fullan (1991) in asserting:

> *Perhaps the most important lesson from recent scholarship on educational change, generally, is that local practitioners and communities must be committed to reform and that alternative practices must make sense to them for change to occur. This lesson is particularly important for tracking since it is so firmly footed in longstanding and deeply felt norms, and it is held in place by pressures from the social-political milieu that depend on these norms to legitimate an unequal distribution of economic advantage.* (p.18)

Oakes' discussion of detracking as a change process that necessitates a re-establishment of workplace norms can be applied to changes in the school's way of thinking and dealing with the community, and vice versa. An investigation of existing attitudes among significant players towards school and community interaction is a logical first step in determining the ways of thinking most affected by a more active community involvement in the school.

Discussion of the Study's Findings

Shared Decision-Making in the School. If the partnership concept, as defined by this study and the *Report*, reaches fruition within the New Brunswick public education system the resulting apportionment of decision-making to various parts of the community would represent meaningful change to established convention. Individuals and factions within the community would undoubtedly seek to exercise their newly affirmed rights to access and influence. A substantial portion of this study's data-gathering effort centered upon stakeholder attitudes towards the share in decision-making owed to individuals in and around the school system. School curriculum, rules, practices and philosophy were viewed as significant areas of decision-making within the school system and were focused upon in an attempt to determine the attitudes of stakeholders towards shared decision-making.

McGrath (1992) depicts the various groups that seek input into the operation of the school as fitting into one of two classifications: (1) cooperative groups and (2) counteractive groups. Respondents with reservations regarding non-school personnel being substantially involved in decisions affecting the operation of the school frequently expressed a fear of individuals or groups with their own agendum gaining influence, and as a result, not acting in the best interests of the student. Although it is likely that only a limited number of those individuals or groups of the four sample groups could be truly categorized as counteractive, but the perception of a substantial proportion of New Brunswick principals, teachers, parents and trustees is that the school system should be guarded against intrusion by those with their own axe to grind.

The establishment of school advisory committees is a case in point where by definition, such a group would be classified as cooperative but would be feared by some as a potential vehicle of domination characterized by selfish motives. Those in the study who showed an amenable disposition towards the establishment of school advisory committees were generally without suspicion, their comments appearing to reflect a naive acceptance of the inherent good of such arrangements.

The realities of the everyday school experience do not generally foster a naive acceptance of individuals or groups who come knocking on the school's door seeking involvement, regardless of how good their intentions are perceived to be. In most cases, a cautious, feeling-out process ensues from such an offer with someone in the system's hierarchy eventually assuming responsibility for its acceptance or rejection. The more potentially controversial the proposed involvement, the higher up in the hierarchy it must go in order to secure the necessary sanction. The risk for those in the school system who assume responsibility for ventures that turn out badly is the loss of esteem from the officials, and more often than not, stagnancy on the system's career ladder. As a result, individuals at the school level (the lowest rungs of the ladder) tend to weigh the consequences of any decision they make against the wishes or positions of those in the central office and school board. In most cases, a tacit fear resides throughout the hierarchy of making any kind of consequential decision, especially one that might turn sour. A genuine sharing of this process with other stakeholders could entail the loss of a certain amount of individual control. However, it could also have a "safety in numbers" effect whereby members of the lower divisions of the school organization would be assured that they alone would not bear the brunt of a failed initiative.

Principals and teachers did not appear opposed to the sharing of decisions with those they believed were part of the school environment. Considering that legislation of individual school advisory committees is a possibility in New Brunswick, it becomes apparent that a situation has arisen with the potential to short-circuit the current restriction of effective school-level decision-making caused by a suppressive organizational hierarchy. With the support and backing of a well organized and authorized school advisory committee, school-level personnel could conceivably overcome a fear of negative sanction on the part of an upper echelon. On the other hand, attempting to operate effectively with a poorly organized and impotent school advisory committee could create a burden for school personnel as they struggle to serve two opposing and difficult masters. Lessons must be taken from previous efforts (the Quebec experience researched by Lucas, Lusthaus & Gibbs [1980] or by Kahn [1992]) to create a greater inclusion of the community in the school's decision-making process. The major implication of such research is that individuals and groups can play an important and effective role in school affairs, but must be allowed a bona fide voice in decision-making; otherwise, their interest in participating dwindles and eventually ceases, or simply becomes perfunctory.

A threat to any organizational culture, whether that of a particular school or of a system as a whole, is the emergence of an individual or group with a divergent point of view and leverage with which to make that view a pending reality. Established procedure is then jeopardized and conflict develops. The general reaction of the organization is to batten down the hatches and attempt to weather-out the storm. To increase the chances of successful shared decision-making a new attitude would have to evolve within the organization whereby non-cooperation would be viewed as a starting point from which to clarify the differences that exist, and by using this assessment to ultimately build a collaborative relationship. The evolution of the partnership concept in the New Brunswick school system would see the emergence of many groups, each pursuing input into its own area of interest in the school. A collaborative approach would sustain the interest and enthusiasm of the various school partners, and be the only way the system could survive the encroachment of those who wish to inappropriately change current practice and procedure.

The Principal's View on School Decision-Making. Amid what McGrath (1992) terms *The Pluralism of Educational Decision-Making* (p. 1) resides the school principal who, according to Mann (1976), is faced with a dilemma. On the one hand, the principal must take into consideration their responsibility to represent the wishes of the community, making room for avenues of participation. On the other hand, the principal could find it difficult to agree to activities that may infringe upon their professional autonomy. Within the context of this study the principal's role in decision-making for school matters appeared positively entrenched within the thinking of the various sample groups, with variation of response occurring only in the degree to which respondents concur. However, the degree varied to which the principal would include others in the decision-making process.

Principals consistently gave themselves more authority in decision-making on curriculum, school rules, practices and philosophy as compared to that of teachers, parents and trustees. They appeared willing to grant teachers a slightly less but nevertheless substantial role in such decision-making, while allocating a limited voice in these matters to parents and students. When non-parent community involvement in school decision-making was considered, principals took a middle stance with respect to the share allowed these individuals in matters of curriculum and school philosophy appearing to make a distinction between non-parent community members, and school personnel, parents and students with respect to the degree of decision-making power they would allow. This degree of exclusion was not as great as that demonstrated by parents and teachers.

To summarize, principals did not appear strongly opposed to the sharing of decisions about schooling with individuals whom they felt to have an immediate school connection. They tended to show more reserve, but not complete rejection, when asked to consider such sharing with individuals whom they perceived as having no concrete ties with the school. This circumstance suggests that power-sharing by principals, and a consequential positive impact on teachers' willingness to accept change, as discussed by Fennell (1992), has a fertile base among principals from New Brunswick on which to grow when teachers, parents and students represent the groups which are targeted for inclusion. However, the relative exclusion of individuals who reside apart from these *connected* groups could present problems for businesses wanting to impact upon education or for community members who are in favour of a community education concept, having as it does a general theme of partnership and an overall objective "to make schools the center of neighbourhoods by providing educational, recreational, cultural and social programs and services selected to meet the interest and needs of all community members" (McLeod 1984, p. 21).

Principals occupy a unique position within the hierarchy of education in that they are not considered members of the teacher ranks, nor are they identified with district-level staff or trustees. Being interlopers in the higher levels of administration they are often more attuned than are teachers or parents to the leanings of these ranks, and consequently more quickly indoctrinated to current district and provincial trends in thinking. With the *Report* recommending significant inroads for community involvement in the schools, and the provincial government having responded with action to some of the *Report's* recommendations (as in the establishment of a position in the Department of Education to encourage school-business partnerships), it is conceivable that trustees and school board administrators have tentatively committed themselves to an anticipated inevitable movement. Principals can adjust their thinking to accommodate anticipated pressure from higher levels of administrators to more fully involve the community in school activities. Unfortunately, those not genuinely committed to this kind of movement in the first place, may end up paying only lip-service to school–community partnerships.

The Teacher's View on School Decision-Making. A clear picture emerged from the study's data with respect to teachers' attitude towards their role in making decisions affecting the school. Teachers saw themselves as worthy of a very substantial share in school decision-making and, in the case of curriculum decisions, they (especially senior high school teachers) would give themselves a great deal more input than they would give any other group, including principals. Teachers defer slightly to the principal in decisions concerning school rules, practices and philosophy, while granting parents and students partial roles in the three areas of school decision-making highlighted by this study's questionnaires (i.e., decisions on curriculum, school rules, practices and philosophy). Teacher's attitudes towards the involvement of non-parent community members in decisions affecting the school was consistently negative in relation to the three areas of school decision-making focused upon in this study.

Teachers (and principals) were selective regarding individuals or groups with whom they were willing to share decisions on school matters. Although teachers granted parents and students slightly less of a role in such decisions than did principals, they did show a general willingness to include these individuals in a limited capacity. With respect to non-parent community members, teachers were even less inclined than principals to include non-parent community members in the school's decision-making process. Similar to the conclusion drawn during the discussion of the principals' view on school decision-making, the prospect for the development of effective school–community partnerships in the New Brunswick schools is rather favourable if based on teacher response to the inclusion of parents and students in the school's decision-making process. It is not promising when teacher response to non-parent community involvement in the school's decision-making process is considered. This would suggest, for example, that the potential for teacher acceptance of school-parent partnership is greater than their potential acceptance of another feature of school–community partnership such as one between school and business; the teacher might fear businesses will seek significant input into the direction of school activity.

Davies (1987) points to informal norms of school organizations as being particularly powerful in their affect upon any change introduced to the school. He labels one such norm as *professional autonomy* in decision-making. Standard operating procedures with respect to decisions in a school generally entail an order of command or degree of influence that sees individuals in the chain knowing their place and becoming immediately sensitive to any change in the *status quo*. Teachers and principals may view parent and student involvement in the school's decision-making process as a potential threat to their professional autonomy; they are willing to grant those persons a partial role due the high stake interest of both parties in educational practice and procedure. Teachers, to a greater degree than principals, may view non-parent aspects of the community as not directly connected to the educational process and therefore not deserving of significant consideration with respect to a share in directional decisions affecting the school.

The Parent's View on School Decision-Making. The most obvious conclusion to be drawn from parental response to the portion of the study dealing with school decision-making is that parents wanted significant involvement in decisions on schooling and would give themselves a much stronger voice in matters of curriculum, school rules, practices and philosophy than would principals and teachers. As well, parents favoured an eminent and virtually equivalent role for principals and teachers in such decisions and would allow students a limited amount of participation. To the same degree as teachers and principals, parents were generally negative in their response to non-parent community member involvement in school decision-making.

The literature on parental involvement in school decision-making suggests that the desire on the part of parents for inclusion in this process does not always translate into reality when opportunity is provided. An illustration of this circumstance is made apparent in a 1979 survey of over 2,000 Canadian parents in which 63.4% of all respondents indicated an unwillingness to serve as a member of a home–school advisory committee (Canadian Education Association, 1979). This same circumstance is manifested in everyday events that surround the school, given the fact that home and school associations are often short on membership or, as lamented in the *Report*, school board elections take place with a significant number of trusteeships acquired by acclamation. This latter circumstance was made obvious by the 1992 New Brunswick municipal elections which realized fewer than half of the trustee positions contested.

It would be premature then to interpret the desire to share in decisions on schooling expressed by the parent sample of this study as an indication of their willingness to proffer extended time and effort on school business. The *Report* takes a rather naive "you build it and they will come" attitude in advocating the legislation of school advisory committees. It offers as evidence the willingness of parents to participate in such councils vague statements regarding a perceived consensus from parents and others:

> *We also heard from parents and some others that they would like to be allowed to participate more in the education system.*
>
> *A consensus seems to be emerging here in New Brunswick as elsewhere: in order for the public school system to fulfil its mandate, education has to be a societal project through which many groups forge alliances to create the common cause and provide the human and material resources that are necessary.* (p. 53)

Fullan (1991), in addressing the topic of parent and community involvement in the school, states:

> *. . . part of the problem may be that many advisory councils and other forms of parent participation in decision-making do not have a clear focus and are not well implemented – that is, they do not address the needs of the parents, and are inefficient, unproductive, and the like.* (p. 239)

Advocates of school–community partnerships seek to address the needs of parents who may wish to take part in the school decision-making process through the provision of training programs (Jennings, 1989; Davies, 1987; Seeley, 1989; Lueder, 1989). The main target group for such training programs are parents from lower socio-economic backgrounds, perhaps having had negative experiences in school, who may not access the school system as well as middle class individuals and as a consequence, maintain an avoidance mode. The parent-training activities of the *Schoolwatch* organization (Silvestri, 1991) illustrates the tendency of parents to become actively involved in the school's decision-making process when they are provided with the knowledge and training necessary to approach and effectively make their voices heard in the system.

Careful attention to the implementation process referred to by Fullan must be considered a key ingredient to any success in realizing increased parent participation in decision-making in New Brunswick's public schools. One part of that process may include the establishment of parent training programs, although some would view such arrangements as attempts to control and co-opt the parent population by dictating the way in which parents gain access to the school organization (Levin, 1982; Spring, 1991).

Attempts to integrate school and community continue with projects like *Schools Reaching Out* (Heleen, 1990) and parent involvement efforts being undertaken in Tennesee (Lueder, 1989). Both *Schools Reaching Out* and the Tennessee experience could serve as appropriate models of implementation for the New Brunswick schools.

The Trustee's View on School Decision-Making. Trustees were slightly more reserved in their support of a role for teachers and principals in school decision-making. In the areas of curriculum and school philosophy, trustees were inclined to grant a more prominent role for teachers than for principals in the exercise of related decisions. Of decisions that have an impact in the classroom, trustees favour a sharing among staff at the school level. In contrast, rules and practices were viewed by trustees as more the jurisdiction of the principal. Compared to principals, teachers and parents, trustees were the most comprehensive in their consideration of others in the school's decision-making process. They tended to be more inclusive of parents and students in such matters than were principals and teachers; relative to principals, teachers and parents, trustees would grant non-parent community members substantially more input into school decisions. Danzberger, Carol, Cunningham, Kirst, McCloud, and Usdan (1987) refer to school boards as often forgotten players on the educational scene. Danzberger et al. emphasize the critical role that school boards play in school improvement efforts and recommend that government reforms seek to enhance the capacity of school boards to bring about and monitor change. The research of LaRocque and Coleman (1989) verifies the effectiveness of what they characterize as successful school boards in improving the quality of schooling.

It is clear from these findings that trustees have a relatively strong orientation toward the inclusion in the school's decision-making process of community components that have no direct or traditional contact with the school. This would suggest that within the New Brunswick public school system trustees may be one of the strongest allies to the school–community partnership concept. The findings of Danzberger et al. (1987) and LaRocque and Coleman (1989) will then have special implications for the future growth of this concept within New Brunswick's school districts. If the actions of effective school board members can bring about positive change within a school district, having such individuals as proponents of school–community partnerships could aid in the implementation process. If this has any chance of happening the statement of Danzberger et al. regarding strengthening the capacity of local school boards to bring about and monitor change takes on special significance. The *Report* addresses this concern with a recommendation:

> *Therefore, the Commission recommends that effective steps be taken to strengthen the role and responsibility of school boards in the setting of goals, managing the resources, and assessing the achievement of the schools in their communities, and to create a closer partnership between schools and communities they serve.* (p. 61)

In the preamble to this recommendation, the *Report* points out that in recent years school boards have had to duplicate, without originality, decisions made elsewhere on finance, staffing and curriculum. The *Report* stresses the need to give school boards greater authority and responsibility for education within their individual jurisdictions and, in turn, the necessity for the school boards to share this responsibility with principals and staffs of individual schools. If the New Brunswick government follows through in the true spirit of this particular recommendation and, if school trustees act accordingly in the true spirit of shared operational responsibilities, then the partnership concept will have gained an essential foothold. If either of the preceeding conditions are not followed then school boards will be rendered impotent as agents of change with respect to a meaningful role for the community in the operation of the school.

Students as Partners in Education. Considering the responses of all the sample groups together, the general attitude towards student involvement in the school's decision-making process can be described as somewhat positive. No one group was adamantly opposed to student participation although there was variation in the degree of acceptance. With respect to decisions on curriculum, trustees and parents were most in favour of the inclusion of students while principals and teachers gave very similar but slightly more reserved responses. The reserve shown by principals was made clearer in a breakdown of their response by school-level: elementary school principals, more so than junior high school principals, were cautious in their endorsement of student participation in decisions on school curriculum, while senior high school principals were substantially supportive. The age and maturity levels of the elementary and junior high school students are obvious factors in the lack of endorsement displayed by principals associated with lower grade levels.

Principals and teachers were generally more positive regarding the share in decision-making they would afford students concerning school rules, practices and philosophy, compared with the amount of participation they would allow students in decisions on curriculum. Parents remained quite constant in their support of student involvement in all three areas of school decision-making focused upon in this study. Trustees showed a stronger support for student sharing in decisions on curriculum, school rules and practices than they did for a student share in decisions on school philosophy.

It is clear that principals and teachers look upon decisions related to curriculum as areas of professional expertise, and although willing to grant a limited role to students and others in such matters, view this process as more central to their role as educators and not a circumstance of equal sharing. In a similar vein, trustees appear somewhat territorial with respect to school philosophy, perhaps viewing decisions in this area as beyond the maturity level of most students, and better dealt with at the district level.

Fullan (1991) comments:

> *When adults do think of students, they think of them as the potential beneficiaries of change. They think of achievement results, skills, attitudes, and jobs. They rarely think of students as participants in a process of change and organizational life. While research of the 1980's has begun to look at students as active participants in their own education, and it has become clearer what should be done, too little has actually happened to enhance the role of students as members of the school as an organization.*

Principals, teachers, parents and trustees in the study did not appear to view students as passive entities. Principal, teacher and trustee respondents had a variation of opinion as to the degree to which students should be involved in differing types of school decisions, but, generally, they were open to at least a limited role for students in such matters.

A circumstance that may act as a catalyst to a "students as partners movement" in New Brunswick is the inclusion in the *Report* of a recommendation giving explicit direction to the province's Department of Education to "assist school boards in the elaboration of policies and procedures for the meaningful participation of students in the operation of their schools" (p.

54). In an earlier discussion of the trustees; view on school decision-making their attitude and facilitative role may again be considered to be a pivotal aid to the realization of effective school–community partnerships. What is necessary to insure a greater prospect of success in this kind of partnership venture is a meeting of the minds on the part of stakeholders such as principals, teachers, trustees and students.

School-Parent Partnership. Schools and parents acting in partnership take many forms and yield varying degrees of involvement. An aspect of school-parent partnership relates to individuals, usually parents, who provide voluntary service. As with parental involvement in school decision-making response to volunteers in the school was overall positive. Relative to teachers, parents and trustees the principals were the least supportive of volunteers helping out with activities such as library service or the supervision of lunchrooms. Elementary principals, however, were most supportive. Volunteers in the classroom helping with activities like tutoring or the setting up of audio-visual aids were received less enthusiastically than the first, with principals again showing the greatest amount of reserve in their response relative to other sample groups.

The traditional view of elementary schools as more open and receptive to parent activity within their confines, when compared to junior or senior high schools, appears substantiated by the responses of principals and parents. From this perspective it can be conjectured that elementary schools in New Brunswick have a more immediate potential to reach the higher levels of parental involvement (Types 3, 4 and 5) referred to by Brandt (1989) – that is, the type of involvement that goes beyond the basic obligations of parents and schools in the education of children to include activities like volunteerism, parent-supported learning activities at home, or parent involvement in school governance. This supposition is reinforced by teacher response regarding the amount of time the school should spend on school–parent relations. Elementary school teachers, as compared to teachers at the junior and senior levels, placed more importance on the need for the school to spend time cultivating school–parent relations.

Generally, all sample groups responded less positively to the notion of volunteers in classroom activities as compared to volunteers involved in non-classroom activities. This was most notable with teachers who were the most positive of all sample groups in response to volunteers helping with non-classroom duties. The concept of parents and teachers as partners in education depicts teachers as comfortable and encouraging with respect to parents in the classroom. However, this is not the case with the teacher sample group in this study. The threat to professional autonomy inherent in such arrangements is of concern to teachers. It is a roadblock to a type of parental involvement in the school that proponents of school-parent partnerships feel is most conducive to the overall improvement of student performance.

Another finding dealing with the development of effective school–parent partnerships occured in connection with the response of parental interest in school. The majority of the teacher sample indicated that parents have only a moderate amount of interest in what happens in school. There appeared only slight variation in this opinion according to school–type (senior high school teachers were the most doubtful of parental interest). This finding has significant bearing on the issue of school-parent partnerships as it speaks to the very underpinnings of any such movement. Teachers and parents working together in a sharing and collaborative relationship has as its starting point an assumption of equal interest. If one of the parties believes the interest of the other is not forthcoming then there is little incentive and/or basis upon which to build a relationship. In contrast to other respondents, trustees and elementary school principals presented positive perspectives on parental interest. These individuals would appear to have the most potential to act in leadership roles for the development of school-parent partnerships in that they hold an essential underlying belief that parents are interested in the schools' efforts to educate children.

School-General Community Partnership. Advocates of the partnership concept invariably stress the importance of the school getting to know its surrounding community in an effort to develop sharing arrangements. Generally, the principals, teachers, parents and trustees placed importance on school activities that encouraged shared experience with the community. Certain groups varied in the extent of their accord depending on the subject of inquiry. Teachers, and to an even greater extent trustees, stood out in their endorsement of the school's use of community members as part of the school's classroom curriculum delivery. Parents associated with elementary schools and senior high school principals, were significantly more supportive of this type of school initiative than their respective counterparts at other levels.

Teachers and trustees were supportive in regard to the importance of the school's use of community facilities and resources as part of curriculum delivery. Parents and principals associated with the elementary school level also stood out in this respect. What appears surprising was the position of vocational teachers relative to other teacher classifications: vocational teachers were significantly less supportive of the use of community facilities and resources as part of curriculum delivery than were other teacher specialists and teacher generalists. Cooperative educational activity has been a major thrust of vocational-type instruction for many years. The response of vocational teachers brings into question the considered value of such arrangements from the point of view of individuals who have appreciable experience and expertise in the field.

All respondents placed importance on the school's study of the local community, as well as its study of issues relevant to localities. The only variation of response was viewed by elementary school teachers who held a significantly more positive position on the study of local community than did junior and senior high school teachers. When asked about the importance of the school facilitating students going into the community to provide service while they learn principals, particularly those of rural schools, expressed reserve while trustees appeared to be the most substantially supportive. Rural school principals cited a lack of opportunity for such arrangements, caused by a scarcity of local business and industry, as the reason for their non-support. With regard to the use of the school's facilities by the community, all respondents endorsed the practice without variation.

Despite the purported amenability of stakeholders towards school–community reciprocal enterprises their willingness to fully accept the participation of only those with immediate ties to the school was apparent. Respondents, especially parents, considered time spent on school-general community relations (the involvement of non-parent community members in particular) at best, to be only a moderate concern of the school. This attitude runs contrary to a basic tenet of the partnership movement that all community members, regardless of their affiliation with the school, should be encouraged to actively take part in the educational process. As the population ages and fewer individuals are sending children to school inclusion of all elements of the community in the school's affairs becomes critical. Popular support for invigorating educational reform, often entailing substantial expenditure of a community's resources must be maintained; otherwise education becomes a low priority item far removed from the prosaic conscience of the general public. When people come to consider themselves as contributing members to any process they become natural allies to that process – an essential ingredient in the kind of collaborative venture inherent in the partnership theme.

School-Business Partnership. The *Report* claims support from parents, teachers, employers and government for the involvement of business and industry in education in New Brunswick. A list of business partnerships in education is provided as well as reference to the growth of cooperative education in the anglophone sectors of the education system, are cited as concrete evidence of the vitality of the movement. The *Report* recommends the formation of a provincial collective or compact (to be called EduCom N.B.) to act as a think tank for the enhancement and dissemination of work and technology-related programs throughout the New Brunswick school system.

The findings of this study tend to verify the *Report's* implied statement of support on the part of stakeholders for business and industry involvement in the school; this support is somewhat more applicable to the senior high school level. Teachers and trustees reacted more favourably than principals and parents to the idea of schools spending time on school–business contacts (such as work experience programs or student tours of community industry). Principals and parents demonstrated relatively negative responses with major portions of this dissenting voice coming from principals and parents associated with the elementary school level. Principals and parents associated with the senior high school level were generally agreeable to having the school spend time developing ties with business and industry.

The overall response of principals, teachers, parents and trustees to business and industry involvement in curriculum delivery, as in the case of guest lecturers from industry coming to the classroom to share expertise or students going to the business site to perform a service while they learn, was positive. However, within the principal group, variation in response to this section of the research instrument occurred according to school-type. Senior high school principals more so than junior high school principals, and junior high school principals more so than elementary school principals, viewed business and industry involvement in the school as important.

The development of partnership ventures between schools and businesses is a priority reform objective of the New Brunswick government as it attempts to change its image of small and disadvantaged, to small but technologically vital. With a report authored by respected academics lending legitimacy to partnership efforts (efforts, in some instances, commenced well before the *Report's* tabling in the Legislature), and re-assignment of a Department of Education consultant to encourage school-business partnership initiatives, the upper echelons of New Brunswick's educational hierarchy are prepared to encourage business and industry as allies in the educational process. An indication by trustees that they are supportive of business involvement in the school adds further credence to the notion that the apex of the New Brunswick education system views school–business partnership as a prominent factor in the future education of New Brunswick's children. One trustee listed 20 school–community arrangements considered as partnerships operating within a particular school district. Two items on this list involve the mentioned business interests in the school, while the remainder for the most part represented traditional government and community service agency interaction with the school, merely identified under the new umbrella term, partnerships. This type of listing is an indication that trustees and district administrative staff are thinking partnership, although it is likely that school-level staff would simply continue to regard most items on such a list as common practice.

School–business partnership, as an educational reform, has all the earmarks of a top-down innovation and, unless careful attention is paid to the implementation process, runs the risk of the "flash in the pan" experience encountered by so many top-down educational reforms of the past. Lip-service paid to such reforms by principals and teachers, who lack a sense of ownership or value for the change, is the general sympton of failed top-down initiatives. Although teachers, as representative of the lower portions of the organizational structure are not opposed to the school spending time on the development of school–business relations or to business and industry involvement in curriculum delivery, they do show a hesitancy in granting those without a traditional stake in the school a role in school decision-making. If business, as a partner in education, begins to demand input into decisions on matters such as curriculum then teachers may become threatened and offer resistance.

A clear understanding of the role of business in school decision-making from the onset could reassure teachers that their autonomy in certain school related decision-making will not be compromised. Critics of business involvement in the school warn of a co-optation of the schooling process (e.g., Taylor 1984; Spring, 1991). Based on their response to the types of business involvement in the school depicted by this study's research instrument, teachers appear to recognize some advantages in association with business and do not indicate a fear of business takeover. Indeed, many teachers may not be aware that anything different is occurring in their school, since many of the activities described as school–business partnership are fairly common practice in most schools. If teachers begin to perceive business involvement in the school as a threat, they will simply tolerate the trappings of the reform until the energies of the reformers subside.

Less convinced of the merits of school–business partnerships are principals and parents at the elementary and junior high school levels. Traditional involvement of business and industry in the school has been in the form of work experience programs associated with vocational options at the senior high school level. This type of arrangement is not completely applicable to elementary and junior school curricula. Contributing to the mind-set of principals and parents is the fact that most of New Brunswick's schools are located in small town and rural settings, and so business and industrial development tends to be minimal. According to Mann (1976), the smaller the place, the less likely it is that it will have any kind of formal business partnership. A number of schools in small towns and rural areas of New Brunswick referred to the difficulty of establishing partnership relationships between school and business while residing in localities virtually devoid of business enterprise; in cases where some industry does exist, respondents express weariness over tapping a resource that has already been approached on numerous other occasions for a variety of school needs.

The concept of school–business partnership for most schools in New Brunswick has a limited immediate application due to the non-urban nature of the province. A timely reference can be made to Premier McKenna's comment in which he reflects upon the chicken-and-egg conundrum as it applies to jobs and training. The conundrum as it applies to industry and partnership ventures in New Brunswick schools would see business and industrial development as a logical prerequisite to widespread and elaborate school–business partnerships. If Mr. McKenna's government is successful in attracting and locating business and industry, not only to urban centers in New Brunswick but to small town and rural areas as well, then the development of widespread school–business partnerships holds promise.

School Advisory Committees. A prominent feature of the school–community partnership concept is the sharing of school decision-making with a representative cross-section of the community. Most often this sharing process takes the form of individual school advisory committees. To ascertain stakeholder attitudes towards school advisory committees, principals, teachers, parents and trustees were asked whether they opposed or favoured the establishment of school advisory committees, their feelings on the present amount of initiative taken by parents in approaching the school with concerns and their feelings on the amount of control presently exerted by the community as a whole.

An earlier exploration of shared decision-making provides the general impression that trustees are the most in favour of shared decision-making related to school matters, tending to be more inclusive of parents in the process relative to principals and teachers, and more inclusive than any other group with respect to the non-parent segment of the community. However, trustees took up a position that was somewhat antithetic to a voice in decision-making for parents and others when that voice is exercised through school advisory committees; teachers followed close behind trustees in opposition to school advisory committees, while principals were split on the question. Parents stood out from the other sample groups in showing strong favour for school advisory committees. In accord with their non-supportive position on school advisory committees, trustees indicated that they think parents already take enough initiative in contacting the school over school related concerns. Trustees also reasoned that the community exerted enough control at the present time in the running of the school.

Supplemental comments submitted by trustees help to clarify their position with respect to school advisory committees. These comments suggested that trustees were concerned about the big picture not being taken into consideration as a result of a proliferation of mini-boards. As a consequence, conflicting agendum would cause an administrative nightmare for district staff and the larger school board. Substance is added to this line of argument as one trustee pointed to the "mess in Quebec". It is obvious that trustees are of the opinion that enough mechanisms are in place at present to represent the voice of the community, and that adding more would simply bring confusion to the system. As elected representatives of the community through a democratic process in which all community members are eligible to participate (by vote or by running as a candidate), trustees think they can appropriately address the wishes and concerns of their constituents. A factor implicit in the argument of trustees, as with all members of the school organization who find themselves in positions to wield power and influence, is the loyalty to established practice which best preserves status and function. Having worked hard to achieve successful status in an organization, it is difficult not to feel threatened for oneself and the organization when a new faction materializes with the potential to redraw the lines of authority.

Parents, who presented themselves as very much in favour of school advisory committees, obviously do not agree with trustees that the mechanisms in place for parental participation in school affairs are sufficient to fully represent their positions. On the other hand, the split nature of parental response as to whether the community has enough control at present or whether it should it seek more, suggests that parents, as a group are not seeking a radical change in control of the system but perhaps more localized input into the operation of their children's schools. Most parents are not entirely familiar with and very often do not follow the decisions and operation of a school board of trustees. When a decision is made that affects their own school situation they seldom feel the inclusion of their individual opinion through the representative presence of the trustee. Furthermore, the vote of a trustee on an issue may be a vote that must consider the good of the system as a whole, or the welfare of a cluster of schools. Therefore, the voice of a single parent from a single school, or for that matter a group of parents from a cluster of schools, may be paid only courtesy attention in connection with a decision where the system's overall welfare must take priority.

Through comments submitted in connection with this study's question on community control, parents gave the most revealing indications as to why they might support the establishment of school advisory committees. Mention of a concern for the basics, the diverse needs of children, overburdened teachers who cannot be expected to do the job alone and the right to a voice as a taxpayer, all reflect a genuine concern on the part of parents for bettering their schools. However, one submission stands out from the rest as it speaks from frustrated experience over parental involvement which frequently sees few in attendance at home and school meetings unless a very major issue is at stake. The fears expressed by teachers, principals and some parents that certain parents who seek input into the operation of the school are there for themselves and their own children and not for the good of all, or they are there because of a personal axe to grind, may have partial origins from school related experiences with parent organizations where some members, disgruntled over some aspect of the school, use the parent organization as a pressure device to critique a personal objective.

The circumstance just described brings into question how the school is to involve that segment of the parent community that has a positive orientation towards school advisory committees, but are staying away from such activity for what many interpret as a lack of time or interest. Advocates of the partnership concept insist that if they are taught how, parents will participate in school decision-making activities. Due to a lack of experience and knowledge they are said to shy away from such involvement. If school advisory committees are to become an effective reality in the New Brunswick school system, the questions of why parents stay away from active participation in school affairs and what is the best way to smooth a path for their involvement must be given priority.

Implications

Implications at the School Level. Efforts to bring reform to the school system are frustrated by school-level staff who are not convinced of the educational value of the proposed change. This is especially true in the case of top-down reform where staff are pressured from above to fall into line. The frequent response in such circumstances is actually a facade of compliance and tacit foot-dragging over time causes reform to lose its intended impact. The intended impact of school–community partnership is one which sees the school working as one with the community in a mutual sharing of decisions and educational responsibility. If the partnership concept is to realize its desired effect in New Brunswick schools, teachers and principals must be convinced of the worth of this arrangement, and their concerns of closer ties with the community taken into account during the implementation process.

Implications for Shared Decision-Making. The most pronounced concern expressed by stakeholders with respect to community involvement in the school occurs in connection with shared decision-making. Apprehension over the damage to the educational process resulting from the involvement of individuals and groups with hidden agendas is a genuine concern, especially when participation occurs in the form of school advisory committees. The grassroots opposition to such quasi-governance bodies, coupled with the historical impotence of these structures in fulfilling their advisory function (as documented by Lucus, Lusthaus and Gibbs (1979-1980) in Quebec, or Andrews (1984) in Vancouver schools), leads to the conclusion that this type of school–community linkage is of dubious value in any movement to enhance the partnership theme in New Brunswick schools.

Resistance on the part of New Brunswick school-level personnel to an imposed advisory arrangement would appear inevitable judging from this study's data, and in all likelihood would lead to the type of foot-dragging depicted earlier in connection with a perceived top-down reform. As well, consideration must be given to the problems uncovered by research into the experiences of other provinces and localities across Canada in sustaining parental interest and ongoing participation in school advisory committees. This research clearly shows that committee members eventually come to view their committee activity as mere window-dressing, defunct of any real decision-making power or influence. The consequence of this perception is a discouraged and half-hearted involvement on the part of many committee members, and eventual difficulty in the recruitment of new membership as the reputation for debility of the advisory committee spreads.

The overall reluctance of stakeholders to include non-parent community members in the school's decision-making process creates substantial roadblocks that would hinder plans to bring the partnership theme to full bloom in New Brunswick schools. In light of this, a movement towards a greater inclusion of community into the operation of the school, especially where advisory committees are concerned, must proceed cautiously, with the initial focus on individuals perceived by school staff as having a major stake in the school's success. As the role and intended purpose of community partnership becomes clear and non-threatening other community factions could be included.

A less intimidating alternative to legislated advisory councils would be an enhancement of the already present, and often respected, role of home and school associations. Although home and school associations presently experience the same problems in attracting and sustaining membership as those endured by advisory committees in the studies of Lucas and Lusthaus (1979-1980) and Andrews (1984), they nevertheless have the advantage of an established tradition and an accepted platform from which to seek increased input into the school's operation. As implied, school-level personnel may already have a trusted and working relationship with home and school; that being the case, this relationship could serve as a building block for the kind of advisory role for community advocated by the partnership concept.

Implications for Student as Partners in Education. A player whose impact through active involvement in decision-making at the school-level has been mainly overlooked by educational research is that of the student. Robinson (1992) suggests that such involvement by students in the operation of the school produces beneficial outcomes to the individual students involved, as well as to the schools and to society in general. Stakeholders in this study show a favourable disposition towards a limited inclusion of students in school decision-making, particularly at the senior levels. The advantages to students, schools and society referred to by Robinson speak to the very purpose of any educational process and to the kind of educational experiences for students that encourage self-actualization. If such positive outcomes are inherent in student involvement in school decision-making, then it is paramount that every effort be made to seek avenues of participation for students. There is substantial opportunity to provide students with a part in many school-level decisions in which the student has both a unique perspective to offer and a high interest in outcomes. This participation could include input into such areas as the selection of optional portions of a school's curriculum, an examination and revision of a school's rules and practices, the development of a list of a school's goals and objectives or the preparation of a statement of a school's philosophy.

Implications for the School–Business Relationship. In this study all groups of stakeholders (principals, teachers, parents and trustees) see an important role for community members in curriculum delivery. A shortcoming of the research questions having to do with this particular aspect of inquiry resides in the selection of accompanying examples meant to clarify for respondents the intent of the items. This can be illustrated by reference to one of the examples used in this part of the questionnaire; e.g., the use of a community member as a guest lecturer. The school's use of a community member in such a fashion is much less threatening to the *status quo* than, say, contracting out to private business organizations business education courses or modern language instruction. Reaction to community involvement in curriculum delivery might have been more negative if the latter type of example had been provided for the questions concerned. Such a reaction would be consistent with the perceived threat to current power structures evidenced by stakeholder response to school advisory committees.

An exception in the overall endorsement of community involvement in school curriculum delivery occurs within the teacher sample group, specifically in the response of vocational teachers. This segment of the teacher sample demonstrates relative reserve in their support of a type of activity in which, through work with co-operative education and a subsequent accent on students in work-experience programs, one would expect unqualified acceptance. Perhaps vocational teachers are in a more immediate position than other teachers and specialists to feel their positions jeopardized by private sector operations that may indeed be better equipped and qualified to offer students cutting-edge technology and instruction. Regardless, opposition to a kind of business involvement in curriculum delivery that would decrease the mandate of the school system and take jobs away from a major stakeholder would be predictably intense.

Implications for School-Parent Relations. The results of this study show that principals, teachers, parents and trustees generally place substantial importance on the school devoting time on school-parent relations. The only variation of response occurs within the teacher group according to school-type. Senior high school teachers stand out as not favouring time spent on school-parent relations to the same degree as elementary and junior high school teachers. From the parents' perspective, other studies (Cattermole & Robinson, 1985; Lindle, 1989) have suggested that parents are far more concerned about good home-school communications than they are about being involved in other ways. Most parents simply wish to be kept well informed, and are not interested in being extensively involved in school affairs. In light of this, the present study's findings on the positive attitude of most stakeholders towards time spent on school–community relations can be tempered to encourage schools to keep parents up to date on school policies and activities.

On the other hand, it has been shown that schools that achieve a high public confidence do much more than communicate well with their parents and the public (Achilles, Lintz & Wayson, 1988). Such schools are noted to be aggressively proactive in their use of a wide variety of involvement strategies to secure people's interest in the school and to promote positive school images. Not only are parents with children in the school focused upon by these involvement strategies, but so are the 70% of the general public with no children in schools. These findings have strong implications for building the type of school-parent partnerships that are appropriate in terms of degree of involvement for the parties concerned, and that satisfy the needs of the school, parents and the general community.

Implications at the Macro Level. The criticisms of community schooling levelled by Taylor (1984, 1988) and Levin (1982) are revisited here in light of certain findings. Specifically, this study finds that stakeholder groups who currently hold power in New Brunswick educational decision-making, i.e., principals, teachers, and trustees, are not really in favour of granting more involvement in educational decision making to those stakeholder groups who currently do not have power, i.e., parents, students and members of the general public. The power-holding groups are supportive of involvement of the powerless groups in involvement activities which are service–oriented; e.g., doing lunchroom supervision. However, these power–holding groups oppose the involvement of the powerless groups in involvement activities which are governance–oriented, i.e., the establishment of school advisory committees. Taylor's (1984) claim of community educators naively maintaining an educational status quo, or his later (1988) charge that community educators view the partnership model of participation as a diversionary tactic to avoid community control, contain a sense of credibility when weighed against the implications associated with the already specified principal, teacher and trustee response. The political realities of organizations lead individuals in school settings to preserve their self-interests. Not surprisingly, substantial change in the order of the school, as that threatened by school advisory committees, is met by resistance on the part of those already established in the bureaucratic web.

It is the general belief of teachers and trustees of this study that a sufficient number of mechanisms are presently in place to guarantee the community both access and influence. If the warnings of communitarian critiques are heeded, communities in New Brunswick must weigh the amount of power and influence actually forthcoming while being granted new avenues of participation. A strictly advisory role for school committees has not produced any authentic voice of influence for communities in Quebec; there is no reason to assume that similar committee arrangements would spawn participation that has any more sway in New Brunswick. An optimistic scenario for those seeking meaningful and self-sustaining community involvement in New Brunswick schools is one where community members think critically regarding the school system's present exclusive nature, and then, avoiding the orchestrated path, move aggressively to assure themselves a genuine role in decision-making.

A clear indication from the parent sample is their desire for more direct involvement in school decision-making. Coupled with the admonition for educational policymakers offered by Dolmage (1992), the implication is manifest for those in charge of education in New Brunswick, both locally and provincially, to re-examine the channels of participation available to those community members who seek to influence the direction of education. Disgruntled stakeholders who turn to the judicial system as a last resort may reek more havoc on the school establishment than is good for both the establishment and the clientele it supposedly serves.

The preceding debate is of considerable significance to those at the macro-level of educational decision-making, in particular the New Brunswick government. If the government wishes to increase stakeholder involvement in its schools, it is going to have to contend with some of the negative attitudes of principals, teachers and trustees toward the greater involvement of those stakeholder groups who are today relatively uninvolved in the New Brunswick school system. The flip side of this scenario could find those at the macro-level of New Brunswick educational decision-making having to contend with more and more demands for educational input from the lower portions of the educational structure.

Conclusion

There are many influencing factors that merge together, as the setting dictates, to define the form and extent of school–community partnerships. A feature central to the success of partnership ventures is the willingness of the parties involved to share in the decision–making process. In this respect, principals, teachers, parents and trustees are generally in favour of sharing school decision-making with those who are directly connected with the school – that is, with those who are parents, or those who have traditional ties with the school. With the exception of trustees, there is a general hesitancy on the part of stakeholders to include non–parent community members in decisions on schooling. Trustees stand out as the group most sympathetic with respect to the view that all members of the community are stakeholders in education. The end result of these circumstances is a present potential in New Brunswick to only partially fulfil the goal of total community inclusion advocated by the partnership concept.

Add to the wary perception trustees and teachers have of school advisory committees, and qualification is added to a significant portion of the positive response to shared school decision–making. If the New Brunswick government hopes to enhance community input into its schools with the advent of school advisory committees, careful consideration must be given to their makeup and role. Without a part to play substantial enough to maintain interest and participation, such committees become mere window dressing; with too much of a part to play in the existing organizational makeup, such committees become mini school boards that might hinder the effective administration of the school system. A redefinition of the role of present school boards may be one alternative that would allow accommodation for effective school advisory committees.

Generally, stakeholders portray attitudes that agree in spirit with the notion of school–community partnership. Even though the logistics of such arrangements, as in the case of school–business partnership in predominantly rural New Brunswick, sometimes do not lend themselves to practical application, the potential for the growth of school–community partnership is encouraged in the perceptions of key players. The concerns expressed over community control, and the lack of efficient delivery of educational service, can be addressed by efforts to clarify roles, and by the restructuring the established organizational mechanisms to make room for a more hands-on community participation.

References

Achilles, C. Lintz, M., & Wayson, W. (1989) Observations on building public confidence in education. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, (11)3, 275-284.

Andrews, A. (1984) *An Assessment of the Mandating of School Consultive Committees in Vancouver: Does Mandating Produce the Intended Level of Parent Involvement?* Unpublished master's thesis, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C.

Brandt, R. (1989) On parents and schools: A conversation with Joyce Epstein. *Educational Leadership,* (47)2, 24-27.

Canadian Education Association (1979) *Results of a Gallop Poll of Public Opinion in Canada About Public Involvement in Education Decisions.* Toronto: Author.

Cattermole, J. & Robinson, N. (1985) Effective home-school communication – From the parent's perspective. *Phi Delta Kappan,* (67)1, 48-50.

Danzberger, P., Cunningham, C., Kirst, L., McCloud, B., & Usdan, M. (1987) School boards: Forgotten players on the education team. *Phi Delta Kappan,* (68)1, 53-59.

Davies, D. (1987) Parent Involvement in the Public Schools: Opportunities for administrators. *Education and Urban Society,* (19)2, 147-163.

Downey, J. & Landry, A. (1992) *Schools for a New Century: Report of the Commission on Excellence in Education.* Province of New Brunswick.

Dolmage, W. (1992) Interest groups, the courts and the development of educational policy in Canada. *Journal of Educational Policy,* (7)3, 313-335.

Fullan, M. (1991) *The New Meaning of Educational Change.* Toronto: OISE Press.

Funnell, H. (1992) Leadership for change: Principals and power sharing. *The Canadian Administrator,*(31)8, 1-9.

Heleen, O. (1990) Schools reaching out: An introduction. *Equity and Choice,* (7)3, 5-8.

Jennings, W. (1989) How to organize successful parent advisory committees. *Educational Leadership,* (47)2, 42-45.

Kahn, L. (1992) *Schooling, Jobs, and Cultural Identity: Minority Education in Quebec.* Garland Publishing, Inc., New York & London.

LaRocque, L. & Coleman, P. (1989) The politics of excellence: Trustee leadership and school district ethos. Paper presented at American Educational Research Association annual meeting.

Levin, B. (1982) Public involvement in public education: Do we have it? Do we want it? *Canadian Journal of Education,* (7)4, 1-13.

Lindle, J. (1989) What do parents want from principals and teachers? *Educational Leadership,* (47)2, 12-14.

Lucas, B., Lusthaus, C., & Gibbs, H. (1979-1980) Parent Advisory Councils in Quebec: An experiment in mandated parental participation. *Interchange.* 10, 26-40.

Lueder, D. (1989) Tennessee parents were asked to participate – and they did. *Educational Leadership,* (47)2, 15-17.

Mann, D. (1976) *The Politics of Administrative Representation.* Lexington, MA: Heath and Company.

McGrath, S. (1992) The pluralism of educational decision-making. *The Canadian Administrator,* (31)2, 1-11.

McLeod, B. (1984) Community education: A future alternative. *Education Canada.* Winter.

Oakes, J. (1992) Can detracking research inform practice? Technical, normative, and political considerations. *Educational Researcher.* (21)4, 12-21.

Robinson, N. (1992) *Learning and Practicing Democracy in Schools: Stated Purposes and Actual Functions of Student Councils in Elementary Schools.* Paper Presented at the Annual Conference of the Canadian Association for the Study of Education.

Seeley, D. (1989) A new paradigm for parent involvement. *Educational Leadership,* (47)2, 46-48.

Silvestri, K. (1991) Parent involvement goes to school: New Jersey's public policy and public schools program. *Equity and Choice*, (7)1, 22-27.

Spring, J. (1991) Knowledge and power in research into the politics of urban education. In Cibulka, J., Reed, R., & Wong, K. (Eds.), *Politics of Education Association Yearbook*. The Falmer Press.

Taylor, G. (1984) Community education: Agent of social change or guardian of the status quo? *Interchange*, (15)2, 23-42.

Taylor, G. (1988) Community education: Participation and involvement. *Education and Society*, (6)2, 35-44.

The Policy and Practice of Community Enrichment of Schools

Hanne B. Mawhinney
University of Ottawa

Recent waves of reform have led scholars of educational administration to re-examine the assumptions upon which past policies and practices of school–community relations rest (Crowson, 1992; Crowson & Boyd, 1993a). A major impetus to the restructuring movement has been the belief that schools are *out of sync* with their environments (Raywid, 1990). Critiques go beyond prescribing a re-alignment of school–community relations to question the "basic theories and root metaphors that shape the way we understand schools" (Sergiovanni, 1993, p. 2). One of the assumptions currently under scrutiny is that schools are *organizations* separate from their environment. Some critics argue that this perspective has led to an overemphasis on the politics of differences and a failure to take into account the common interests that can, and do, integrate schools with their communities (Crowson, 1992). Others argue that in order to survive schools must become "learning organizations" that "constantly strive to connect with the wider environment" because "ideas are out there, politics and partners are out there, and ultimately we are all out there" (Fullan, 1993, p. 84). This newmind set is based on the assumption that, as learning institutions, schools are part of the greater complexity of the community rather than separate from it. Sergiovanni (1993) argues that the predominant metaphor of schools as organizations, borrowed largely from managerial and organizational theory literature, is best replaced with a new grounding metaphor of school as *community*. A metaphor of community provides the fertile ground for understanding the integrative mechanisms that link schools with their environment. Educational reformers believe that such understanding is crucial because "no major educational problem is only a 'within system' problem"; rather, any action that stays within the system – based only on its own resources, personnel, decision-making processes and planning – is misconceived, parochial and likely to fail (Sarason, 1993, pp. 35-36). The well-documented turbulence of current school environments, marked by "high volatility, scarce resources, and increasing complexity due to parental and community involvement" (Goldring, 1993, p. 23) exacerbates the need for schools to cooperate, communicate, coordinate and collaborate with other agencies and community groups (Fullan, 1993).

In the United States, efforts to foster collaboration among schools, communities and social service agencies are underway in many states and "experimentation has been growing at a pace that makes the tracking of developments difficult" (Crowson & Boyd, 1993a, p. 148). Although the rapidly expanding literature has produced a number of guidelines, particularly related to service integration (e.g. Bruner, 1991), it typically adopts an advocacy rather than a critical perspective. There have been few in-depth evaluations of whether service integration promotes significant improvement in the educational or life chances of students and the welfare of families (Crowson & Boyd, 1993). Current literature is rich with experiential evidence and is characterized by conceptual confusion regarding the distinctions among collaborations, cooperative ventures and the integration of services.

Some progress in understanding school–community links has been made through current work aimed at clarifying some of the conceptual confusion over the distinctions in practices of cooperation and collaboration. Crowson and Boyd (1993b) have drawn from Hord's (1986) distinction between the two models. Following the general assumption that more integration of services for children is better and that an end state of collaboration, although difficult to achieve, is the ideal, Crowson and Boyd (1993b) have developed a framework defining the process of linkage as a continuum from separate institutional service provision to institutionally collaborative service provision defined by different goals, structures, institutional interests, environmental controls, and institutional conventions. They suggest that "every experiment in children's services coordination can be examined first as a point along a continuum, from little-to-no integration of services to a collaborative ideal in the integration of services" (p. 41). While providing a useful orientation, the framework is not without difficulties. Crowson and Boyd observe, for example,

> *. . . few experiments to date have failed to achieve some progress toward collaboration, but few have progressed very far toward the 'ideal'. The determinants and characteristics of progress on the process dimension of collaboration are still under-explored terrain. But so also is the question of the extent to which, and the circumstances under which, full collaboration is desirable or necessary (p. 41). There is a need to develop further conceptual understanding of the mechanisms by which schools reach out and engage in collaborations with the community.*

Objectives

This paper examines the links between the policy and practice of school outreach into the community in three high schools piloting a project recently developed in the Canadian province of Ontario by a consortium composed of government ministries, school boards, teachers' federations, community groups and a university research center. The goal of the project is to promote community collaborative effort to enhance the life chances of high school students. An analysis of the findings of an ethnographic study of the practice of community enrichment in each of the schools will be discussed. The objectives of the project were to (1) identify the institutional policy framework guiding the community enrichment endeavor, (2) identify, describe and compare the unique processes developed for community enrichment from the perspective of the collaboration initiators, and (3) extend existing theoretical conceptions of school–community relations through analysis of themes emerging in the ethnographic study.

Methodology

The study reported here was grounded in an interpretive orientation to inquiry that adopts a holistic conception of social relations. The study assumed that individual elements of social systems derive their meaning in relation to the entire set of relations: "everything exists as sets of connections with the world around it" (Land & Jarman, 1992). Implied in this assumption is a dynamic wholeness that can best be captured by an interpretive methodology that seeks to understand behavior through the analysis of "social interaction, meaning and communication" (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 25). An interpretive approach is consistent with the study's focus on understanding the social processes through which relationships are negotiated and re-negotiated (Strauss, 1978).

Data Sources

This paper draws from an ongoing study of interagency collaboration in Ontario (Mawhinney, 1993). Data for this qualitative, policy oriented study were gathered through analyses of documents, memos and records and in-depth interviews (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). During the first phase of the study, interviews with officials from the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training identified several collaborative ventures underway in the province, including the Secondary School Demonstration Project (SSDP) which was selected for the in-depth study reported in this paper. The project is a six-year cooperative venture which brought together educational stakeholders in the province, including representatives from several ministries, secondary school federations, nine school boards, the Addiction Research Foundation and the Ontario Association of Children's Mental Health centers in a coordinated approach to "maximize the beneficial effects of secondary schools on the academic performance and adjustment of students" (Offord & Wright, 1992, p. 3). Data explaining the genesis of the project and its early development were gathered over a period of six months from documents, and from telephone and personal interviews with Ministry officials and with representatives of the university research center responsible for training teachers, monitoring the development of the program and evaluating its outcomes. Analysis of these data suggested that one of the interventions in the SSDP focusing on the community enrichment of schools provided a unique opportunity to examine school–community relations undergoing a change to promote collaboration.

Data Collection and Analysis

During a second phase of the study, the initiators of the collaborative ventures in the three high schools, which are pilot sites for the community enrichment intervention, were interviewed by the researcher during on-site visits in three communities in southern Ontario. To ensure confidentiality they, their schools and others associated with the project were given pseudonyms. The tape-recorded in-depth interviews, conducted in the respondents' offices, lasted from one and one-half to three hours. Each respondent's specialized knowledge of a unique model of community enrichment required that the interviews be conducted using non-standardized questions (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). The involvement of all three respondents in the same project, however, allowed verification and extension of observations about the processes developed to assist implementation and evaluation. At the same time, the researcher gained conceptual understanding of school–community relations by drawing from the differences among the unique models of community enrichment that each high school had developed. Documents provided by the respondents and by the university research center were gathered. They included copies of correspondence, reports, memos to collaborative partners, school newsletters, school calendars, school goals/objectives, proposals and research reports. Ethnographic field notes were also taken recording "high inference interpretive" observations of the communities and the physical setting of the sites (Le Compete & Preissle, 1993, p. 228). As "building blocks of analysis, interpretation, and theory building", these "high inference descriptors" were derived from the researcher's developing conceptual framework (p. 228).

Tape-recorded interviews were transcribed and documents were analyzed using a combination of two analytic procedures: (1) the familiar constant comparative methods commonly used in ethnographic analysis, and (2) a strategy described by LeCompte and Preissle (1993, pp. 257-258) as "typological analysis." Two types of typologies, *mundane* and *theoretical*, were developed and integrated during analysis of the data. Mundane, or "common sense", analytic categories were developed to outline the parameters of the three models of community enrichment, and subsequently "scanned for patterned relationships" using constant comparative methods in order to clarify categories (p. 257). (See Table 1.)

Table 1. Typology of the Parameters of Community Enrichment Models

Initiating Forces
- Influence of provincial policy framework.
- Instigator of involvement in Community Enrichment Project?
- Impetus for involvement in project?
- What is the problem?

School Context
- Socio-demographic & economic profile.
- Existing school–community relations.
- What support from key players in school–community?

Community Outreach
- Process of selection of stakeholders.
- Who was chosen?
- By whom were they identified?
- Why were groups included?
- Community Advisory Group formed?
- What is its role and mandate?
- Where, how often does it meet?
- Does it have a chair, formal communication processes?

Outcomes
- Goals of the community approach?
- Focus and scope of programs?
- Resource allocation by collaborators.
- Evident and anticipated benefits.
- Existing and anticipated problems.
- Relationship to other programs?
- Outcome measures evaluated.

The purpose of this typology was both descriptive and generative, and in the analysis it was linked to developing concepts drawn from current research on collaboration (Crowson & Boyd, 1993b; Gray, 1989; Wang, 1992), organizational learning and change (Fullan, 1993) and alternative concepts of school–community relations (Crowson, 1992; Sergiovanni, 1993).

The following section of this paper draws from the analysis of the parameters of the three community enrichment models outlined in Table 1, beginning with the impetuses for collaborative links and profiles of the three schools and their communities. The community outreach process undertaken at each site is documented and the different models of community enrichment that have emerged are then described. The analysis that follows examines the four *common sense* dimensions of the community enrichment ventures in the context of current conceptual approaches to understanding the school–community links (Crowson & Boyd, 1993a, 1993b; Fullan, 1993; Gray, 1989; Sergiovanni, 1993; Wang, 1992). The themes emerging from this analysis are integrated to inform the theory, policy and practice of school–community relations.

Ethnographic Background to the Study

The community is pure southern Ontario, located far enough from its neighboring industrial city to maintain its small-town aura. Although clearly built in earlier decades, Oakglen Vocational Collegiate shines with care and warmth that extends right to the firm handshake of its principal, Beth Marshall. The cheerful impression created belies the difficulties many of its students face. The school houses a total of 1,700 regular students, 43% enrolled in the non-academic general level program and 57% in the advanced academic program. Thirty percent of these students come from single parent families, 10% come from families living on social assistance, 6% live in subsidized housing and 9% of the students are recent immigrants. Studies conducted by social service agencies and schools in the community have found a significant increase in the percentage of youth confronted with multiple high-risk factors.

Mountain View Community School does not exist yet, except on plans drawn from hundreds of hours of discussions among students, teachers, parents, community members and, especially, in the mind's eye of principal-to-be, Brian Scott. The community which has developed these plans has the prosperous look of middle-class comfort which has come at a cost to both families and youth. Despite its comfortable appearance, a recent *community needs assessment* by the Integrated Services Advisory Committee of the region found an increase of *mortgage-poor* families who are often under significant financial stress. The report documents a lack of youth programs for children left alone for long periods of time after school because both parents commute to work outside the community. Not surprisingly, there is a shortage of affordable, high quality child care. There is a wide range of pressures on families arising because of the changing role of women, changing family relationships, lack of time, and issues of discipline and expectations, especially for adolescents. These pressures have contributed to an increase in the number of children with emotional-behavioral-mental health problems who are described by schools and agencies as *out of control* and lacking sufficient social skills.

Several miles closer to urban Toronto, the street to Beachwood Collegiate Institute has a semi-industrial feel. Three very visible statements are posted in the entrance hall outside an office: a *Race Relations and Ethnic Policy Statement*, a *Statement of Equal Education Policy* and a *Safe School Environment Policy*. Inside the office, an engaging secretary explains the registration requirements to a student acting as an interpreter for a Middle Eastern family who wish to register a young relative; she cajoles another student for failing to appear for an examination, reminding him that he will now have to repeat a whole semester. Jeff Rogers, the vice-principal of Beachwood, explains that both incidents reflect the demands confronted by the school. As well, the school's working class community has felt the impact of the closure of a large car parts manufacturing plant in recent years. The community has become increasingly transient as economic migrants from the Atlantic provinces move in to the cheaper accommodation the community offers. They join immigrants from eastern Europe, the Middle East and the Caribbean.

Beth, Brian and Jeff, their high schools, their school boards and their communities are about as diverse a group as can be found within mainstream Canadian education. The schools they administer are, of course, guided and governed by a common educational policy framework established by the government of Ontario. Moreover, despite the unique micro contexts of their communities, the three schools face many of the same problems that place students at risk of dropping out, of academic underachievement and of antisocial behavior. Beth, Brian and Jeff share the view of critics in both the United States and Canada who recognize that schools cannot solve these problems alone within their four walls (Crowson & Boyd, 1993a; Gardiner, 1991; Hodgkinson, 1989; Kirst, 1991). Like a growing number of schools in both countries, these three high schools have responded by forming new linkages with families and other agencies in their communities. They have also become loosely linked in a collaborative project to develop and implement models for the community enrichment of each of their high schools. Each school is enriching its capacity to improve the life quality and life chances of youth by developing programs in cooperation with community groups including parents, mental health and social service agencies, recreation services, churches and business.

The Rationale for school–community Collaboration

The community enrichment programs examined in this article are part of a wave of reform initiatives to strengthen community connections with schools (Crowson & Boyd, 1993a, 1993b). Crowson (1992) observes that the impetus to "reintegrate the school into the life of the community" comes from the "deep sense in these reform-minded times that something vitally important is still missing" in the relationship between schools and their communities (p. 15). Policy makers, researchers and front-line workers currently acknowledge that the traditional partnerships between the family, the community and social institutions such as the school are no longer adequate to meet the needs of the majority of today's children and their families (Bruner, 1991; Kirst, 1992; Gardner, 1991). In the past, schools educated children, but their primary care and nurturing was seen as the responsibility of a traditional family unit supported by voluntary community groups and religious institutions. The "church, the school, and the home were understood to be the three separate institutions basic to human development" (Cunningham, 1990, p. 5). The institutions operated separately but were linked together through formal partnerships such as the parent-teacher organizations formed to facilitate communication between schools and families.

The traditional partnership between the family, the community and the government has broken down. In Canada, despite the creation of complex networks of agencies providing children's services, a gap has grown between the needs of children and the systems in place to meet those needs (*Children First*, 1990). Critics argue, for example, that schools working in isolation cannot meet the needs of a growing number of students living in conditions of stress and risk as the result of poverty, neglect or abuse. A recent Canadian study suggests that "a child who is abused or neglected at home or has lived in a series of unsuccessful foster care placements may drop out of school and run away to live on the streets. The same child may be drawn to experiment with illegal drugs, become depressed, and attempt suicide" (*Children First*, 1990, p. 21).

One current rationale for collaboration suggests that poor education, health and social outcomes for young people result, in part, from the inability of the current service systems to respond in a coordinated and comprehensive fashion to the multiple and interconnected needs of both children and youth. New *ecological* perspectives on family support, child development and schooling have implications for the organization and delivery of children's services (Mawhinney, forthcoming; Chavkin, this volume). They suggest that interventions for at-risk children must be based on the understanding that child development is a "complex negotiation between external, contextual forces and innate capacities and temperament" (Jacobs & Weiss, 1988, p. 497).

Crowson and Boyd (1993a, p. 146) describe developing school-based or school-linked collaborations, suggesting that schools must become "investors" and "reach out into the community in an attempt to strengthen the 'social capital' available to children in that community." This argument draws from Coleman's (1987, p. 36) notion of social capital as "the norms, the social networks, and the relationships between adults and children that are of value for the child's growing up." Crowson and Boyd (1993a) conclude that the "interests and goals of the school are advanced if the school itself invests heavily in the creation of a sense of community and works hard to develop productive linkages with and among families" (p. 146).

A recent assessment of the trends in social problems in Ontario argues that a new approach to meeting the needs of children, youth and families is required because current structures neither adequately reflect such an ecological orientation nor do they stengthen the social capital of children (*Children First*, 1990). Critics of the American system such as Gardner (1989) conclude that the "program mentality", which has pervaded policy making for children's services, has resulted in fragmented responses that ultimately fail. Similarly, social services in Ontario are described as "too fragmented, overspecialized and overburdened, and they have limited outreach capacity and are working in isolation from one another" (*Children First*, 1990, p. 49). Recognition of the dire consequences of what Gardner (1989) calls "failure by fragmentation" has led to renewed efforts to to foster collaboration and integration of social services, often situated in schools (Kirst, 1991; Levy & Shepardson, 1992).

Impetuses for Children's Service Collaboration in Ontario

It is important to note the influence of the promotion of collaboration as a means of ensuring better student outcomes on teachers and educational policy makers. The promotion of collaboration in current educational literature provides a kind of diffuse backdrop for the more specific impetuses for community outreach in each of the three high schools that were studied. More direct impetus has come from several key reports produced by a loosely connected group of health, social service and education professionals who have been influential in promoting policies for interagency collaboration in Ontario during the past five years. The Ontario Teachers' Federation, for example, recently submitted a report to the government laying out a comprehensive statement on collaboration, *Beyond the Glitterspeak: Creating Genuine Collaboration in Our Schools* (1992). The report calls for collaborations within the school, with parents and the community, with the world of work and between ministries and school boards. A most influential and far-sighted report of a government advisory committee, *Children First* (1990), has had an impact on the children's services policies of the current government of Ontario. This report argued that Ontario's disconnected network of services is unable to meet the needs of children: "service systems are stretched to the limit, and yet many of the problems of children are getting worse" (p. 114). The report suggested that "voluntary collaboration, while certainly worthwhile, will not necessarily succeed in the long term because it is subject to the interests of those involved in continuing a cooperative relationship" (p. 115). It concluded that "if real progress is to be made in meeting children's entitlements, there must be a clear and unequivocal government commitment to a children's agenda, and structures must be put in place to ensure that a children's system is created" (p. 115). The report recommended that this required the creation of a provincial *Children's Authority*, integrating the responsibilities and staff of five ministries involved in services for children and youth. It also recommended that *Local Children's Authorities* to be held accountable to local communities and to the provincial government for planning and managing a children's system, be established in communities throughout the province. Such authorities could overcome the fragmentation of decision making in services for children and youth at the local level by bringing together a system of social, educational, correctional, health and recreational services in a community (*Children First*, 1990, p. 119).

Policy Direction for Community Enrichment

The Secondary School Demonstration Project is an example of government policy promoting collaboration without direct funding incentives. A key element in the development of the SSDP was the active involvement of a widely respected psychiatric expert on children at risk and the secondary school teachers' federations, in a working group sponsored by the Ministry of Education that examined issues surrounding at-risk youth. Jan Lomax, a Ministry official who assumed responsibility for coordinating the efforts of the committee, notes that in the spring of 1991, when the group decided to develop a project for secondary school students, she "sent out a memo to a random selection of boards in the area who could drive to Toronto and just sit and have a feasibility meeting" to hear the medical expert describe the need for a Secondary School Project to be initiated by a provincial survey of programs for at-risk students in high schools (interview transcript). The boards were asked to contribute $5,000 for the first-year planning and research phase. Jan observes that the boards bought into the research project because they felt it was needed and "no board could ever afford to do that on its own" (interview transcript). Enough support was generated and the research was subsequently conducted, resulting in a report identifying the strategies and programs in place to help high school students at risk of "dropping out of school, disruptive and violent behavior, substance abuse, low school achievement and truancy" (Wright & Offord, 1992). The survey found that a large number of "interventions used a counseling or an academic format to effect change in dropping out and low school achievement" and that teachers "were largely responsible for planning and implementing the interventions" (p. 10). Few high schools used key service organizations: for example, only 1.7% of the 432 schools responding used public health nurses and other key agencies, such as volunteer and family counseling organizations, and children's aid societies were used even less. The research team also found that "a large number of school run programs" had "no evaluation procedure and no documentation on the program effectiveness" (p. 10).

The findings of the study and other research and consultation during the year led the group to develop several interventions. One of the important decisions in the design of the interventions was to seek out existing programs for study, documentation and evaluation. The rationale, according to Jan, was that "there is a lot of good stuff happening out there" (interview transcript); the problem was "how to tap into that good stuff." Reflecting on the reasoning of the group, she commented: "You don't need to come in with a whole new package and tell everybody to shift what they are doing and do that because they won't buy it." Instead, the group looked at what was going on in the schools that seemed to fit the literature and research on the *best practices* for meeting the needs of at-risk youth and developed three interventions based on the needs of (1) individual youth (co-operative learning), (2) youth in the school community (peer-coaching); and (3) youth within the school, within the family and within the broader community (community enrichment). The goal of the SSDP is to overcome the isolated way in which secondary school students have been dealt with by the various service sectors and to foster the formation of partnerships to develop more comprehensive services that involve a more holistic perspective on youth. The project supports local-level initiatives directed toward identifying desired student outcomes and designing prevention and intervention strategies that will maximize the academic performance and adjustment of secondary school students.

A Problem-Solving Orientation to Conceptualizing Collaboration

The process of developing the SSDP was slow. According to the ministry official it took a year and a half of "very many meetings until we figured out what the priorities would be, what the interventions would be and what they would look like and which experts would lead them" (interview transcript). The process involved meetings with superintendents to ascertain what their boards were doing and ultimately to extend invitations to schools to pilot the interventions. Superintendents in turn presented the proposals to principals in their boards and a principal was selected who would then buy into the piloting of the program; it would usually be somebody who was doing something and wanted it evaluated anyway. The advantage of this approach from the perspective of designing implementable policies is expressed by Jan: "We were dealing with believers who were doing something." In the case of the community enrichment intervention, the role of the research team during the piloting phase of this study is to work with the schools to identify what they are doing and to evaluate the outcomes. The purpose is to identify components of a community enrichment model that can be used by other schools wishing to undertake such an initiative. Piloting the program in a few boards is intended to reduce implementation and administration costs to other boards at a later date. The incorporation of an evaluation process sets this project apart from most intervention programs in schools.

The development of the policy direction of the SSDP underscores that collaborative initiatives can be initiated by government using policy tools other than funding. In this case, the commitment of the individual Ministry official to the value of identifying interventions to meet the needs of at-risk children was important. Her commitment came in part because of government support for a preventative agenda to promote the well-being of youth. Support, as a policy instrument, can take many forms other than funding. Jan notes, for example, that instead of funding, "the Ministry can coordinate the project. Somebody has to phone somebody. So they phone in here. We set up the meetings, we cover the costs of the meetings, we get the minutes out, we can assist in getting problems solved, and calling the boards" (interview transcript). In the case of the SSDP, the research team was made up of medical and social service professionals who lacked knowledge of the politics and practices of school boards and high schools. The Ministry official provided guidance on the logistics of planning interventions around the school calendar. Besides communication and expertise, governments are also able to draw on instruments of facilitation, persuasion and legitimation. Jan comments:

> *. . . we link with the teachers' federations . . . we can get their support. We're the facilitator [because] we can talk to the other ministries and say: this is a project you want to support. Now they don't have any money but they link with their regional offices or other area offices so they can send out a note that says: we're supporting this project and we would appreciate your cooperating with it.* (interview transcript)

As a non-funding, non-mandating policy response to the promotion of the integration of social services for youth, the SSDP differs from the kind of top-down approaches commonly taken by governments. From 1971 until 1985, "numerous demonstration projects and technical studies" were funded, and often "dictated from the federal government to state and local governments and programs" (Gerry & Certo, 1992, p. 121). Research has found that when funding for such top-down policy directives dries up, projects typically falter (Useem, 1991). The SSDP demonstrates that provincial policy direction promoting school–community collaborations can be provided by drawing together the expertise developed in existing school–community linkage initiatives. Governments can provide a forum in which representatives of initiatives sharing common foci can be brought together to share insights and to engage in problem solving around common concerns. This problem-solving approach to developing and implementing collaborative innovations allows differences among initiatives to become the source of learning and change for all (Fullan, 1993). That is not to say that government support is unnecessary; rather it suggests that the policy framework must be flexible enough to allow for different interpretations of what constitutes a productive practice of collaboration. Practices of school–community linkages may vary substantially in the forms of collaboration taken and in the resulting programs.

The Practice of school–community Collaboration

The widespread experimentation in school–community connections currently underway in North America has spurred considerable descriptive and advocacy-oriented research, but less analytical analysis. Although the growing number of reports describing school–community linkages have provided rich descriptions of collaborative practices, there is continuing conceptual confusion regarding the elements of program designs, and the distinctions among processes of collaborations, cooperative ventures and the integration of services. Understanding the policy and practice of school–community collaborations requires that program designs and collaborative processes be taken into account. The following discussion draws from some of the recent conceptual developments in these aspects of school–community linkages in discussing the analysis of the practices of community enrichment at Oakglen, Mountainview and Beachwood. Table 2 presents the core elements of the practices in each high school.

Collaborative Program Designs

Preliminary findings of research on the growing array of program designs for linking schools with families and communities suggests a "pattern of unique programming directions based on site-specific strengths, needs, and constraints" (Wang, 1992, p. 64). Research on new programs has produced an inventory of types of school–community connection programs including: parent and child education, health care, and quality child care at pre-compulsory level. While informative, such inventories fail to inform research and policy on the key design elements that distinguish different programs. Some research has attempted to clarify these dimensions. Wang (1992), for example, identified more specific design elements of extant school–community connection programs in secondary schools. These included mentorships of students by members of the community, co-operative part-time employment to enhance student career planning, program linkages with vocational schools, community colleges and other training institutions (p. 66).

Detailed inventories of programs linking schools with their communities, while useful, do not provide the conceptual basis for policy development, learning better practices or developing theoretical understanding of the school–environment nexus. These requirements can better be fulfilled by examining the extent to which the focus, scope and aim of programs take into account different aspects of core elements of schooling such as:

- student characteristics;
- the curriculum, including instructional approach, tasks, assessment;
- teacher characteristics (expertise, behavior, attitudes, expectations);
- classroom, school characteristics (grade level, size, climate); and
- implementation support systems (school, district and community-level).

The utility of examining collaborative programs from this perspective is evident when the aims and components of the programs developed at the three high schools described in Table 2 are analyzed. Without taking these elements into account there is a danger of either over- or under-estimating the potential impact of a program. For example, at first glance the peer-helping program developed at Oakglen appears to involve only minimal community enrichment, and seems only marginally targeted at meeting the needs of at-risk youth. However, when analyzed from the perspective of its orientation to students, the program has the potential for broad influence on student social skills development and contributes to the development of a sense of community responsibility in all students. Oakglen has developed a peer-helping program, which links the primary and elementary schools in a student-directed responses to developing social skills. Unlike programs targeted specifically for at-risk students, the peer-helping model is universal in application. It is based on a belief in the value of empowering students to deal with the risks they confront. Peer helping teaches youth

Table 2. Aims, Initiating Forces and Program Components of Community Enrichment Models

	Oakglen	Mountainview	Beachwood
Project Aim	To develop a comprehensive, integrated social skills program, K-10, which maximizes the opportunities in life for children & youth	To provide a life-long learning center which intergrates local services/resources & fosters a school family/community partnership across all ages	To meet the needs of high-risk high school students who are exhibiting problems in their behavior, learning skills, or attendance patterns
Initiating Forces	Principal support Needs of adolescents Changing family needs History of school as involved in community Teachers' support Caring climate	Principal advocacy for community school Experience with collaboration Policy direction by provincial advocates Support from school board	Vice-Principal leadership Changing needs of students, families Experience of staff Teachers' support Caring climate in school
Primary Program Components	A social skills program linked across a "family" of schools based on a peer-helping model	A new high school designed & built to accommodate community involvement	A high-risk student referral system based on inter-agency collaboration
Secondary Program Components Emphasis: • Students • Teachers • Curriculum • Support	Peer Helping Program: • led by trained & certified adults who model skills • structured training sessions for students • student training is interactive & involving • students selected represent social composition of community • ongoing supervision of students	Child care, elder care (including recreation & rehabilitation); a wellness center, multicultural center; recreation & fitness; culture-creative artists shared facilities & programs; integration of special needs individuals; employment center/business & industry liaison/careers	Components depend on referrals by teachers & determinations by team, and may include: peer tutoring, counselling & life skills development
Community Linkages	A social skills steering committee formed drawing from external agencies	Ongoing meetings with parent, community & agency groups	A steering committee of community agencies formed & brought into referral meetings
Processes of Collaboration **Communicate Initiate &**	**Communication Jan.'91-June '92** • Presentation of Community Enrichment Project to district administration • Meetings with personnel to formulate project • Meeting with Project Monitoring Team • Training of peer	**Community School Concept Identified Sept. '91** • Principal-designate of new high school to be constructed identified on the basis of his proposal for a community school **School Design Jan. '92-June '93**	**Initiation of project Sept. '91-June '92** • Staff began to notice more students with serious problems: withdrawn, disruptive, academically challenged • Proposal to release a teacher to develop a high-risk referral program accepted by staff

helpers

Cooperate, Develop & Design

Phase 2: Cooperation
Sept. '91-June '92

- Inservice draws together representatives of community agencies & educators to discuss methods of integrating youth services
- Training & placement of peer helpers
- Subcommittee of community advisory group to research existing social skills programs

Consult & Collaborate

Phase 3: Collaboration
Sept. '92-Sept. '95

- Roles of partners clarified
- Mechanisms to ensure ongoing community involvement established

Monitor & Evaluate Expand or Revise

- Cross-panel & inter-agency staff development of service integration
- Expansion of peer-helping model to involve more agencies
- Develop a social growth profile for students

- Monthly meetings of principal with parent community to develop design for new school
- Meetings of principal with parents to determine existing outcomes
- Meetings with Community Integrated Services Advisory Council to define mandate of schools; includes reps of community & social services; health council, tourism & recreation

Ongoing Community Consultation
Sept. '93-Sept. 94

- School mandate
- Exit outcomes to be used to design curriculum & subsequently to determine school organization (leadership positions)
- Ongoing negotiations with local agencies & ministries for funding programs

School Operation
Sept. '94-

- Formal process of collaboration established with community groups & agencies

- Student referral process developed by vice-principal & team

Development
Sept. '92-June '93

- Referral process operates during school year using school personnel to determine appropriate means of helping students
- Community Enrichment Project presented & school decides to join
- Involvement in Project leads referral team to identify agencies that service community
- School convenes meeting of invited agencies to begin to identify resources & to establish links

Collaborative Links Expanded
Sept. 93-Sept. 95

- Linkages with agencies developed
- Groups engage in joint problem-solving to identify resources for youth problems

---

decision skills to combat negative peer pressure. As a program response to the needs of youth in its community, the peer-helping model developed at Oakglen contains a number of core elements. It is focused in curriculum design but broad in its potential effects. It reflects a preventative orientation with benefits to the school community that snowball as new teams of peer helpers are trained. It requires only teacher support through training and monitoring, not direct intervention, but offers teachers the benefits of a potentially more cooperative student body

In contrast to Oakglen's universal program, Beachwood's program is directed to at-risk students. Teachers and other school personnel, including support staff such as secretaries and caretakers as well as outside agencie, may refer students who exhibit problems in their behavior, learning skills or attendance to a team of school personnel. The team attempts to respond to students' needs as quickly as possible by drawing from appropriate services available from within the school as well as from outside agencies. The approach taken is focused more specifically on direct, individualized treatment rather than on diffuse preventative efforts such as those embodied in the Oakglen program. Teachers are actively involved and in control of this program, and benefit from the support the team provides in dealing with potentially disruptive student problems. Students benefit from the individualized attention provided by a team of professionals but are not directly involved in running the program. The high-risk referral program, like the peer-helping model, has the potential to create positive spillover effects for the entire school. Teachers are given support in dealing with potentially difficult problems. Students are nurtured and connected with community agencies that can provide the services which they need.

Unlike the relatively contained scope of the peer-helping and high-risk referral programs, community enrichment at Mountainview will encompass every aspect of the school's physical design, organization and programs. The school, currently under construction, began as a proposal by Brian Scott for a community-oriented, life-long learning center which integrates local services and promotes partnerships among schools, families and the community. The rapid growth of its student population in the late 1980s had prompted Brian's school board to call for proposals by prospective principals of concepts to guide the design of a new high school. Brian's successful proposal for a community school includes facilities and programs for child care, elder care, a wellness center, a multicultural center, community recreation and cultural facilities and an employment center. The scope of community enrichment at Mountainview cannot be captured by focusing on student, teacher or curriculum; rather it requires some understanding of the focus of community involvement. Program-defined collaborations such as the peer-helping and high-risk referral programs, can be contrasted with broad orientations to community enrichment which encompass many programs and indeed represent the working philosophy of a school.

The complexity of the programs at Oakglen, Beachwood and Mountainview cannot be fully described by the kind of inventories that define programs as having a particular focus, such as vocational adjustment. In order to inform the policy and practice of collaboration, program designs must be analyzed in terms of conceptual dimensions such as their focus, scope, emphasis on student orientation, teacher involvement, curriculum and community emphasis. Table 3 outlines some of the possible design dimensions that collaborative programs can incorporate as an initial step toward broader conceptual understanding to inform policy and practice. Further systematic analysis of the costs and benefits, both direct and indirect, of various combinations of these program design dimensions would provide a basis for improved collaborative programs.

Table 3. Conceptual Dimensions of Program Designs

Dimensions		
FOCUS	Preventative	Treatment-oriented
SCOPE	Universal	Targeted
STUDENT ORIENTATION	Student-directed	Student-focused
TEACHER INVOLVEMENT	Direct supportive	Indirect supportive
CURRICULUM	Focused	Open
COMMUNITY EMPHASIS	Program defined	School-focused

Collaborative Processes

A program focus does not capture the dynamic nature of school-community relationships. It can provide an inventory of community groups and agencies and can document the degree of their involvement. This approach is commonly taken to clarify the conceptual confusion around distinctions between communication, cooperation and collaboration. Crowson and Boyd (1993b), for example, have developed a sophisticated framework linking program structures with processes of collaboration drawn from Hord's (1986) distinction between cooperation and collaboration. The basis of this distinction is the extent to which projects are characterized by a shared sense of purpose, mutuality, common communication processes and shared expertise. Crowson and Boyd (1993b) have conceptualized this distinction as a *process* continuum from separate service provisions to collaborative provisions and they have drawn from recent theorizing on institutional collaboration (Gray, 1989; Gray & Wood, 1991; Wood & Gray, 1991) in identifying four institutional structures which are implicated in these different processes: goals, interests, environmental controls and institutional conventions. At one end of this continuum, children's services are delivered by separate institutions which do not agree on the nature of children's problems, which lack common institutional interests and conventions and which must make different environmental accommodations. At the other end of this continuum, institutionally collaborative service provision is characterized by institutional structures which reflect a shared sense of problems and goals, common institutional interests and rewards, interdependent environmental accommodations and, blended or shared institutional conventions (Crowson & Boyd, 1993b).

Although this line of reasoning provides some criteria with which to assess the degree of collaboration, it is not without problems. Conceiving of collaboration as an ideal state characterized by common institutional goals, interests, rewards and conventions leads inevitably to the conclusion that some permanent collaborative structure is possible, a conclusion fraught with practical and theoretical problems. Using a continuum framework which adopts programs as the unit of analysis to assess the degree of collaboration evident in each of the three high schools examined in this paper illustrates some of the limitations of this approach. Neither Oakglen's peer coaching model nor Beachwood's high-risk referral program draw schools and community agencies together to the extent that their interests become common, their reward structures shared, and their institutional conventions blended. Mountainview's many community-centered projects do bring community agencies onto the school site; however, it is possible that social service and health personnel will operate under very separate institutional structures, conventions and reward systems. None of the three schools' programs incorporate all the key dimensions suggested by continuum frameworks as required for institutionally collaborative services.

This judgment would surprise the community groups and educators who view their efforts to reach a common understanding of the problems and needs of their students as truly collaborative. Beth, Jeff and Brian do not present their projects as ideal models; however, all three believe that they are engaged in dynamic processes of collaboration with their communities. Each of them views the goal of their respective collaborative effort as less to create permanent structures which integrate all services for youth than to ensure that their schools respond to the needs of their students, families and communities. They view their communities as essential partners in solving the problems their schools confront and they have developed strategies to link with their communities. Programs are outcomes of the dynamic partnerships that sometimes result from these strategies.

The kind of community-linking strategies that Beth, Jeff and Brian are developing can best be captured by viewing collaboration not as an ideal end goal, but by viewing it as an outgrowth of interaction. Schrage (1990) takes this view when he defines collaboration as a "process of shared creation: two or more individuals with complementary skills interacting to create a shared understanding that none had previously possessed or could have come to on their own" (p. 40). Understanding the impetus for this process is crucial to providing conceptual understanding of school–community relations. Gray (1989) suggests that it is "an emergent process rather than a prescribed state of organization" (p. 15). Rather than being at the opposite end of a continuum from cooperation, collaboration is a process in which "both cooperation and coordination often occur" (p. 15). Cooperation and coordination rather than collaboration reflect relatively "static patterns of interorganizational relations" (p. 15). Collaboration is a "more dynamic evolutionary" process than is suggested by the institutional theory adopted by Crowson and Boyd (1993b). The temporary and dynamic collaborations characterizing most school–community relations can be better understood as "negotiated orders" (Gray, 1989, p. 228). Negotiated order theory (Strauss, 1978; Goffman, 1973; Day & Day, 1973) emphasizes "the fluid, continuously emerging qualities of the organization, the changing web of interactions woven among its members, and it suggests that order is something at which the members of the organization must constantly work" (Day & Day, 1977, p. 132). Collaboration is, therefore a:

> *process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible . . . the objective of collaboration is to create a richer, more comprehensive appreciation of the problem among the stakeholders than any one of them could construct alone.* (Gray, 1989, p. 5)

This dynamic problem-solving orientation to collaboration is evident in the three community enrichment approaches presented here. Brian Scott illustrates this orientation in his description of the process of developing Mountainview's community school focus:

> *I have been working with the community for a year and a half on this, at monthly meetings and I have been taking them through the same process which I'm involved in, from design [of the school] right through to programming. From this large group will evolve advisory councils in the areas of curriculum, utilization of resources, and organization.* (interview transcript)

Brian's project is a most ambitious example of the dynamics of community enrichment; he anticipates, for example, that the community will be involved in identifying the outcomes that will determine the curriculum and organization of the school: "What we want the graduate students to know and to do." Mountainview's community will debate questions such as:

> *Do we expect all kids to put in so many hours at community service before they graduate? Do we expect kids to have facilities in another*

> *language? How do kids demonstrate that, in fact, they have the kinds of team work skills that they really need?* (interview transcript)

The dynamic strategies Brian uses to link his school to its community emphasize discovering and developing shared values. Brian observes: "What we are doing is establishing our values once again" (interview transcript). The nature of this kind of school–environment link cannot be entirely captured by sociological frameworks of organization drawn from either contingency or resource dependency theory, the two theories which dominate the organization-environment literature. Schools do not simply respond and adapt to their environments as these theories suggest. Nor do concepts of schooling grounded in the traditional conflict-based political models provide an adequate framework for understanding the impetuses that make schools not only community responsive but also *community-creating* institutions (Crowson & Boyd, 1993a, p. 142).

Implications for Theory, Policy and Practice

A number of recent efforts to understand the conceptual dimensions of both *community-responsive* and *community-creating* impetuses to school–community relations have drawn from Tönnies' (1957) distinction between the competitive order found in aggregative society (*Gesellschaft*) and a community emphasis (*Gemeinschaft*), (Crowson, 1992; Crowson & Boyd, 1993a; Sergiovanni,1993). These approaches have examined the strategies that have been developed to overcome problems in linking a school to its community, rather than focusing on particular programs to determine the extent of collaboration they reflect. These problems are often associated with "unresolved issues of information sharing, resource mingling, and professional turf" (Crowson & Boyd, 1993a, p. 152). There is general agreement that one of the most pervasive barriers to coordination is agency territorialism (turf). Analysis of the administrative strategies that have been developed to overcome the barriers created by territorialism has identified two orientations that are based on different assumptions about the nature of the relationship of a school to its environment. Gray (1989) suggests that a competitive model of the organization and its environment assumes that collaboration involves "the unfolding of a negotiated order" among previously unconnected sets of stakeholders. Strategies to foster collaboration based on this model recognize that each potential connector is a stakeholder with a set of interests and a special agenda of his or her own" (Crowson & Boyd, 1993a, p. 165). Recognizing the competitive nature of such connections, this orientation emphasizes strategies such as gaining support from agencies, including written agreements, and defining and assigning tasks to different stakeholders.

Crowson and Boyd (1993a) distinguish between the strategies to foster collaboration drawn from a competitive model and strategies derived from an integrative model of the organization. Crowson and Boyd suggest that:

> *. . . incentives, formal agreements, and negotiated contributions used by the stakeholder approach contrast with the integrative approach which emphasizes establishing trust, opening up decision making and governance, building conceptual and attitudinal bridges, establishing newly shared rituals, traditions, and symbolic connections, and working toward a sense of community across organizations.* (p. 166)

Elements of both sets of strategies are used by Beth, Jeff and Brian to link their schools and communities. The themes emerging from their descriptions of these strategies have implications for theoretical conceptions, policies and practices of school–community linkages. Implicit in these themes is an acknowledgment that collaborations are social constructions that are more or less permanent. This conception of collaboration emphasizes the dynamic wholeness of social relations, a notion which Gray (1989) suggests has "profound implications for the way in which we currently understand relations between organizations and groups" (p. 270). Collaborative efforts, for example, can be seen as attempts by organizations to survive and develop in the face of environmental turbulence. Land and Jarman (1992) observe that "the reality of evolutionary success demonstrates that 'fitness' is not simply about 'adapting to an environment', but rather the continuing improvement in the capacity to grow and build ever more connections in more varied environments" (p. 30). To develop, organizations like schools must use strategies to learn from diversity and complexity. Fullan (1993, p. 84) notes:

> *Learning organizations neither ignore nor attempt to dominate their environments. Rather, they learn to live with them interactively. Continuous change is built into the relationship because widespread interactions under conditions of dynamic complexity demand constant attention and movement. Change forces are seen as inevitable and essential to learning and growth.*

The strategies used by Beth, Jeff and Brian to promote collaborative arrangements represent efforts to initiate and manage the change forces that will enable each of their schools to learn and grow. Just as learning is not a one time event, but rather an ongoing process, so collaboration is not a static state to be achieved once. Fullan (1993) states that "learning organizations will have to be able to form and reform a variety of alliances simultaneously and over time. Particular collaboratives would end; others would start up" (p. 97). The goal of a school's collaboration with its community is to engage in continuous self-correction. This requires not "evaluation in the narrow sense but development of an organizational culture that makes self-correction a norm and not a war" (Sarason, 1990, p. 129). Brian, who is attempting to develop this culture of change in his community school, observes:

> *I really believe that we have not let people in, that it's time to do so. It is time to let people know what we don't know. As long as we know what we don't know, then we're okay. If we don't know what we don't know, then we're in trouble. I have found people most receptive to that. Therefore, I am looking at a much more systematic approach to improving the school which is based upon constantly assessing how we're doing, from assessing achievement in subjects and across subjects to getting input from graduates as to what we could have done better.* (interview transcript)

The goals of the community collaborations being developed at Mountainview, Beachwood and Oakglen are the dynamic interactions they engage in with their communities to define and suggest solutions to mutual problems. Problem-solving and learning are central themes in descriptions of the processes of collaboration given by Beth, Jeff and Brian. Beth observes, for example, that a community agency involved in Oakglen's Social Skills Advisory Committee discovered that:

> *. . . the kinds of things that they were trying to do with youth really corresponded with the kinds of things [the school is] trying to do and that probably the most efficient and effective way for them to operate is for them to harness themselves with [the school] in terms of delivering programs. On the other hand there was also the aspect of our learning better what their mandate was and perhaps modifying what we were doing in light of these things.* (interview transcript)

The implication of Beth's observations is that learning from collaboration means learning from differences. It implies that while shared understanding may be a valuable goal, it is important not to discount the value of different viewpoints, "world views and imagined solutions" (Fullan, 1993, p. 97). Fullan observes that differences "contain the necessary ingredients for productive action. . . . Differences across stakeholders are also our friends because negotiating these differences into a new shared reality is where new solutions lie" (p. 97). It is implied that initiators of collaborations such as Beth and Brian, who are comfortable operating within the dynamics of differences, can gain valuable insights to develop their schools. In doing so they are engaging in what Fullan calls *change agentry;* they appreciate that the semi-predictable and volatile character of change processes requires that they collaborate, on both a small and large scale, in order to learn and accomplish their goals (p. 17). Effective change agentry, according to Fullan, draws from a personal vision built from a sense of moral purpose that extends beyond self interest to focus on societal improvement. In reflecting on his approach to dealing with differences, Brian illustrates the way that moral purpose supports change agentry directed to learning from differences. He reflects:

> *I have a very clear concept and a belief in . . . valuing the needs of individuals . . . and how we can cooperate and work together throughout the community to ensure that this improves the quality of education for each child. I think that is what drives us. I feel pretty comfortable with myself, and I am willing to take the risk [of widespread community collaboration] because if I mess up, then that's okay because I think it's for a good purpose.* (interview transcript)

Brian accepts that collaboration may bring disagreement when he comments:

> *I like disagreement. If we don't disagree, we're not going to make effective decisions. I think I have the skills to facilitate that disagreement so it doesn't become negative, but turns into something positive. . . . I want to bring the community to [the point where individuals] say we have a problem. And then we can talk about what we can do about it . . . so it's all of our responsibility. The whole concept is of a community of learners.* (interview transcript)

Brian's strategies to move groups beyond disagreement to some shared goals and sense of responsibility for achieving those goals reflects an orientation described by Crowson (1992) focused on community building. This orientation moves beyond a view of schools as responsive organizations engaged in self-interested learning to viewing schools as community creating. Oakglen's model illustrates the complex ways in which schools can be community-creating and how they can generate a *gemeinschaft* climate (Crowson, 1992). Ostensibly defining Oakglen's peer-helping program as a community enrichment model appears puzzling, since community groups and agencies are only involved through an advisory group rather than through direct intervention. In this involvement the program does reflect the school's responsiveness to the needs of the community as expressed by the advisory committee. The program is seen as much more by the school's principal, Beth, who explains that the peer helping program:

> *. . . relates to community most fundamentally in terms of the emphasis on developing a sense of community and of responsibility to community in students. . . . That is a part of what we see as actually building a feeling of community and having that play over into other [community-linked] school projects.* (interview transcript)

In this way schools are linked to their communities not only through formal collaborative arrangements but also through developing in students the qualities that are the foundation of community: respect, responsibility and caring. These are the qualities defining the community of the mind which Tönnies (1957) described as emerging from the "binding of people to common goals, shared values, and shared conceptions of being and doing" (Sergiovanni, 1993, p. 10).

Conclusion

The policy and practices of community enrichment of schools described in this paper grew out of the recognition that links among social institutions are often tenuous. They adopt strategies that encourage collaborative problem solving and the use of local resources and skills to build self-sufficiency and well-being within the community as a whole. Many believe that such strategies are required to strengthen the capacity of families, schools and other community institutions to ensure the well-being of children and youth. We know that schools cannot alone ensure the healthy development of young people. There is, however, growing recognition that communities can enrich the capacity of schools to promote student well-being and that schools can build communities by developing the social capital of children. Policy to encourage this agenda for collaboration may harness and enhance practices already underway in schools and need not rely on mandates or financial incentives. The practices examined in this paper suggest that collaboration may produce fragile structures but robust philosophies of action that maximize the capacity of collaborators to learn from their differences. As orientations to action, the community enrichment models described in this paper adopt integrative strategies that build communities of the mind. These strategies tie schools and their communities together by emphasizing responsibility and caring, and by creating a sense of belonging and an understanding of common problems and goals.

References

Bruner, C. (1991) *Thinking Collaboratively: Ten Questions and Answers to Help Policy makers Improve Children's Services.* Washington: Education and Human Services Consortium.

Children First (November, 1990) Report of the Advisory Committee on children's services. Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario.

Coleman, J. (1987) Families and schools. *Educational Researcher,* 16 (August-September), 32-38.

Crowson, R. (1992) *School–community Relations, Under Reform.* Berkeley: McCutchan.

Crowson, R. & Boyd, W. (1993a) Coordinated services for children: Designing arks for storms and seas unknown. *American Journal of Education*, 101(2), 140-179.

Crowson, R. & Boyd, W. (1993b) *Structures and Strategies: Toward an Understanding of Alternative Models for Coordinated Children's Services.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Atlanta, Georgia.

Cunningham, L. (1990) Reconstituting local government for well-being and education. In Mitchell, B. & Cunningham, L. (Eds.), *Educational Leadership and Changing Contexts of Families, Communities, and Schools* (pp. 135-154). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Day, R. & Day, J. (1977) A review of the current state of negotiated order theory: An appreciation and a critique. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 18, 126-142.

Edelman, P. & Radin, B. (1991) *Serving Children and Families Effectively: How the Past Can Help Chart the Future.* Washington: Education and Human Services Consortium.

Fullan, M. (1993) *Change Forces.* London: Falmer Press.

Gardner, S. (1991) A commentary. In Edelman, P. & Radin, A. (Eds.), *Serving Children and Families Effectively: How the Past Can Help Chart the Future* (pp. 16-20). Washington: Education and Human Services Consortium.

Gerry, M. & Certo, N. (1992) Current activity at the federal level and the need for service integration. *The Future of Children*, 2(1), 118-126.

Goffman, E. (1973) The interaction order. *American Sociological Review*, 48, 1-17.

Goldring, E. (1993) School restructuring: Responding to changing environments. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Atlanta, Georgia, April 12-16.

Gray, B. (1989) *Collaborating: Finding Common Ground for Multiparty Problems.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Gray, B. & Wood, D. (1991) Collaborative alliances: Moving from practice to theory. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 27(1 & 2).

Hodgkinson, H. (1989) *The Same Client: The Demographics of Education and Service Delivery Systems.* Washington: Institute for Educational Leadership, Center for Demographic Policy.

Hodgkinson, H. (1991) Reform versus reality. *Phi Delta Kappan* (September), 9-16.

Hord, S. (1986) A synthesis of research on organizational collaboration. *Educational Leadership*, 43(5), 22-26.

Jacobs, F. & Weiss, H. (1988) Lessons in context. In Weiss, H. & Jacobs, F. (Eds.), *Evaluating family programs* (pp. 497-505). New York: Aldine De Gruyter.

Jehl, J. & Kirst, M. (1992) Getting ready to provide school-linked services: What schools must do. *The Future of Children: School Linked Services*, 2(1), 95-106.

Kirst, M. (1991) Improving Children's Services. *Phi Delta Kappan* (April), 615-618.

Kirst, M. (1992) Financing school-linked services. In Kirst, M. (Ed.), *Rethinking School Finance: An Agenda for the 1990s.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Land, G. & Jarman, B. (1992) *Break-point and Beyond.* New York: Harper Business.

Lawton, S. & Wignall, R. (1993) *Financing of Social and Health Support Services Through Schools.* Toronto: OISE.

Le Compte, M. & Preissle, J. (1993) *Ethnography and Qualitative Design in Educational Research*, 2nd ed. San Diego: Academic Press.

Levy, J. & Shepardson, W. (1992) A look at current school-linked service efforts, *The Future of Children*, 2, 46-55.

Marshall, C. & Rossman, G. (1989) *Designing Qualitative Research.* Newbury Park: Sage.

Mawhinney, H. (1993) *A Canadian Perspective on Developing Interagency Collaboration.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Atlanta, Georgia, April 12-16.

Mawhinney, H. (forthcoming) Discovering shared values: Ecological models to support collaboration. In Adler, L. & Gardner, S. (Eds.), *The Politics of Linking Schools and Social Services.* London: Falmer Press.

Offord, D., Boyle, M., & Race, Y. (1991) Children at-risk: Schools reaching out. (March, April), *Education Today,* 18.

Ontario Child Health Study (1990) *Children at Risk* Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario.

Ontario Teachers' Federation (1992) *Beyond Glitterspeak: Creating Genuine Collaboration in Our Schools.* Toronto: OTF.

Raywid, M. (1990) Rethinking school governance. In Elmore, R. (Ed.), *Restructuring schools: The Next Generation of Educational Reform* (pp. 152-205). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Sarason, S. (1990) *The Predictable Failure of Educational Reform.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Sarason, S. (1993) *The Case for a Change: The Preparation of Educators.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Schrage, M. (1990) *Shared Minds.* New York: Doubleday.

Sergiovanni, T. (1993) Organizations or communities? Changing the metaphor changes the theory. Invited address, Division A presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Atlanta, Georgia, April 12-16.

Strauss, A. (1978) *Negotiations:Varieties, Contexts, Processes, and Social Order.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Thornburg, K., Hoffman, S., & Remeika, C. (1991) Youth at risk; society at risk. *The Elementary School Journal,* 91(3), 199-207.

Tönnies, F. (1957) *Community and Society (Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft).* (Translated and edited by C.P. Loomis). New York: Harper & Row. (Originally published 1887).

Useem, E. (1991) What a difference a recession makes: The rise and fall of integrated services for at-risk youth in Massachusetts. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Chicago: Illinois

Wang, M. (1992) School-based service integration: Program design and evaluation considerations. In Holtzman, W. (Ed.), *School of the Future* (pp. 63-81). Austin: APA & Hogg Foundation for Mental Health.

Wood, D. & Gray, B. (July, 1991) Toward a comprehensive theory of collaboration. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science,* 27(2).

Wright, R. & Offord, D. (1992) Secondary school demonstration project. The Centre for Studies of Children At Risk, Chedoke-McMaster Hospitals, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario.

The Collaborative School and the Empowered Community: A Total School-Based Management Model

Adrian Guldemond
Redeemer College

In this paper I describe a school organization model that encourages both community empowerment and quality education through its management structure. The Total School-Based Management model (TSBM) is functioning effectively in North America and is based on a simple political premise: both collaboration and empowerment require a human scale of organization in which people make real decisions. Related to this is the view that education in a school can only be effective if the school serves the best interests of the local community and if the community sees the school as working in the best interests of its children. If these two beliefs are practised realities, then effective education is very likely to happen.

This TSBM model may not be the solution to the ills of the public school system unless its supporters are prepared to abandon its fundamental principles. The paradigm of the public school system in North America has four fundamental features on which its credibility is built. These are, according to James Cibulka (this volume):

1. the professional autonomy of its practitioners;
2. the claim to possession of technical/expert (neutral) knowledge;
3. the necessity for a separate social institution (schooling) for education; and
4. the essential hierarchical nature of the relationships which make up professional culture within a legislated system framework.

This is best summarized as a universalist legislated management model. Although this paradigm has spread over the globe, its North American manifestation is generally acknowledged to have serious problems. Specifically, the public schools "have become as insulated, bureaucratized, and professionalized as the deviance control agencies it was designed to enhance" (Lewis, 1993, p. 88).

Much of the current collaborative school literature arises from the growing realization that this autonomous expert school model is now seriously flawed. Its basic political premises, that there is one best school system, that the teachers know what it is and that everyone else should simply do as they were told and pay the taxes, are no longer credible. As a survival strategy, many methods are being developed to re-establish relationships with the community and so change the shopping mall alienation that modern schooling institutions appear to have acquired.

The model which I describe is based on four different characteristics:

1. a professional and collegial status of the teachers;
2. a philosophical or value-based foundation for professional knowledge;
3. an integrated, personalist social theory with a community management commitment; and
4. a decoupled, nonhierarchical, voluntary relationship among schools.

It is especially the third characteristic, its integrated, flat management style, which I call a total school-based management model. It is called *total*, because *all* the decisions affecting the school are taken by the one local school board. That includes not only all budget decision, all hiring/firing decisions, student admission, student expulsion, but anything else that affects the well-being of the educational community, such as smoking policies, school design and the bus routes.

Why consider this particular model? First, it exists and works. Second, consider this as a *radical* interpretation of collaborative education. Third, it is able to provide a novel perspective on the restructuring debate. This TSBM model is presented as a significantly better way of arranging the power relationships within a school so that the entire focus of the operation is on the learning of the students and not on the political objectives of the country, the status objectives of the teachers or the political ambitions of the trustees. In short, this model can be used as a way of depoliticizing schooling in order to reintroduce effective education.

In conclusion, I propose that it is possible to achieve a collaborative school in an empowered community, through a decoupled school culture marked by a TSBM model which requires a great deal of involvement from all stakeholders in the school community.

Source of Data

The TSBM model functions effectively in a set of independent schools across North America associated with Christian Schools International (CSI). The sample involved here involves 500 schools across the United States and Canada. However, the specific school statistics will be used from the 75 Ontario members of the group associated with the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools (OACS).

If an adequate data base on local school management existed in North America, then presenting structural statistics for these independent schools would make sense. However, since comparable information is not readily accessible, I shall approach the model from a political point of view by commenting on the restructuring debate.

The Restructuring Debate

Collaborative schools and associated questions of management have become popular largely because of difficulties created by the entrenched characteristics of the existing public school system. There is a great deal of talk about collaboration, cooperation, interaction, involvement and partnership. There is also a great deal of scepticism among the public in terms of whether this means anything new or real. Is it merely another passing reform fad which will go the way of all others? Lewington and Orpwood (1993, p. 164) note:

> *The current system does not acknowledge the right of the users of the education system to have an influential voice in determining how to improve school quality. To be sure, every conceivable interest group is represented in advisory bodies to provincial governments. Ontario, for example, has a learner's advisory council with no fewer than 52 representatives from a cross-section of education interest groups, but the sheer size and diversity of such a group guarantees no clear decisions. In any case, since ministry bureaucrats, teachers and school boards have a majority voice on the council, the educational establishment remains in complete control of the policy agenda.*

Restructuring is intimately related to the decentralization and accountability of educational decision-making. The following two quotes demonstrate this development:

> *Restructuring is a reorganizationa that replaces central planning, control, and supervision with a deregulated system in which the bottom line counts most. In practice, educational restructuring of this type is associated with notions such as school site management, school-based management, school-based budgeting, and the local management of schools.* (Lawton, 1992, p. 1)

> *By the early 1990s, a variety of educational systems, separated by distance and ideology, had begun to devolve more and more decision-making in important areas to individual schools and their communities. These systems are spread across the English-speaking world. They include: England and Wales (1988), Edmonton (1989), Chicago (1988), New South Wales (1989), Western Australia (1987), Victoria (1983), and New Zealand (1989).* (Corson, 1992, p. 15)

The Ontario problem is that decentralization of any significant kind is strongly resisted and/or compromised by political interests and ideological structures.

> *The traditional hierarchical system and top-down reform processes work against the likelihood of locally appropriate and successful educational programs, and restructuring is intended as an improvement. . . . With restructuring, schools are asked to develop solutions to problems of a magnitude that has not successfully been addressed before.* (Bascia, 1992, p. 6)

> *In short, it is not just a prior right of parents that supporters of the secular monopoly oppose, but any significant influence by them at all. This may appear to be a strange assertion at a time when restructuring is the most popular piece of jargon in the educational dictionary. Parental choice is usually a part often proposed and occasionally enacted restructuring – in Chicago, New York City, White Plains, Minnesota, Massachusetts, Edmonton and Calgary. In practice parental choice is almost always severely limited.* (Holmes, 1992, p. 6)

The Quebec version of decentralization has progressed much further than the talk in Ontario. The *Quebec Revised Education Act* has restructured education to allow parents a greater say in their children's schooling and to give each school more autonomy. The school principal, as the key professional in charge of the school, must coordinate these various committees and the flow of information between them. This has potential.

There is no need to choose between centralized and decentralized methods of management if tolerance and good sense will allow both options to exist together. Presumably educators are in favor of tolerance and choice. A basic political premise in this paper is that there is no one best solution to educational organization in general. There is, however, a best management model for achieving specific, identified political parameters. *Since there are many different political goals for education, there should be different management models.* For a political, national school model, it is necessary to insist on centralized structures amenable to government control. For a community-based model the structures should facilitate local control. Both types can co-exist if there is a political will.

Decentralized or Deconcentrated: A Caution

If the public school system remains based on the rationalist, universal professional paradigm as the basis for its centralized political controls, then perhaps restructuring is not the best word to use. In other words, collaborative school management is only a solution if the centralized, legal structure which supports Ontario's centralized and massive school system is dismantled. And until the political structure is radically altered, it is really not appropriate to borrow various kinds of collaborative schemes form different jurisdictions and different types of school operations, such as the independent schools described in this paper.

> *Schools have been intractable to change and the attainment of goals set by reformers. A major failure has been the inability of reformers to confront this intractability. As a result each new wave of reform learns nothing from earlier efforts and comes up with recommendations that have failed in the past. What is called reform is based on an acceptance of the system as it has been and is. Change will not occur unless there is an alteration of power relationships among those in the system and within the classroom.* (Sarason, 1991, p. xiv)

What themes might one draw from the history of school reform in North America? D. Tyack reaches one conclusion relevant to the problem of governance:

> *Most changes in governance, whether touted as centralization or as decentralization, have generally left institutional deposits that made school structures more rather than less complex.* (p. 24)

Perhaps the best way to look at the current situation in Ontario is to use the word "deconcentrated," as opposed to "decentralized." The following quotes from a Swedish educator, Rolph Lander, at the 1992 Restructuring Education conference held at The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, illustrates this perspective:

> *Decentralization is a question of control over education and its results. Looking closer to its present form one obviously finds a decentralization mainly aiming at redesigning the political influence, and not to any important extent aiming to increase the influence of other stakeholders. It should perhaps better be called deconcentration (Lyon, 1985), i.e., local political actors are allowed the greater participation in planning the decision process while at the same time important instruments for control are kept at the central, national level.* (Lander, 1992, p. 1)

> *The decentralization or deconcentration takes place within a very strong bureaucratic tradition. This tradition has defended an administratively clear chain of responsibility anchoring the bureaucracy to political power. According to Gunnell, Gustagson, and Anders Lindstrom (1991), this is reinforced by the traditional consensus culture within the homogeneous suite of society. The central and the local levels strive to think in accord with each other. John Laulo, in 1985, says that in Sweden 'school is an extension of political authority'.* (Lander, 1992, p. 2)

> *The traditional hierarchical system and top-down reform processes work against the likelihood of locally appropriate and successful educational programs, and restructuring is intended as an improvement. . . . With restructuring, schools are asked to develop solutions to problems of a magnitude that has not successfully been addressed before.* (Bascia, 1992, p. 16)

Types of Public School Inside the System – Choice in Ontario

In spite of the paradigm of the system, Ontario does provide a number of choices which come within the rubric of the *Ontario Education Act* (Table 1). Although these choices do exist and although there are variations in the way that these schools operate, a significant factor about these school choices is that they all occur within the closed social political structure of the public school system. All of them come under the control of the bureaucracy. My view of the situation is that unless Ontario educators are prepared to introduce real choice, no significant educational reform will take place. Enough digressions on the political context; the usual passions which are ignited when the choice debate is alluded to are described by Lewington and Orpwood:

> *The choice issue ignites the passions. . . . Supporters paint a simplistic picture of a market-driven system that will force underperforming schools to shape up or close down. Detractors, many of them teachers and school administrators, create a similarly misleading impression that public education will collapse under the weight of choice. The truth lies somewhere in between these extremes.* (p. 62)

I am proposing this TSBM model as the solution for those who want effective community-based education. If Ontario provided a level playing field among all legitimate choices, educators would not have to waste all their energies devising ingenious variations. Instead they could invite all stakeholders to get involved.

Table 1. Ontario School Choices

I. **Publicly Funded** 2 million students (97%)

1. Public Boards
    - "Regular" school in neighborhoods
    - Alternative schools (including religious)
    - Magnet schools (academic)
    - Specialized schools (vocational, arts)
    - French immersion
2. Separate Boards
    - Catholic
    - Protestant
    - French
    - Alternative
3. Provincial Schools
4. Native - Reserves or city

II. **Nonfunded "Private"** 70,000 students (3%)

1. Religious
2. Academic
3. Vocational/Business
4. Pedagogical
5. Remedial/Resource

Alternative Political Theory

Yes, a different view of politics does exist. The TBSM model is based on a political philosophy generically called *personalism.* Perhaps one of the most eloquent statements of it occurs in the papal encyclical *Centesimus Annus,* as Social Principle #11:

> *The guiding principle of all the church's social doctrine is a correct view of the human person and of his unique value. God has imprinted his own image and likeness on man, conferring upon him an incomparable dignity. In effect, beyond the rights which man acquires by his own work, there exist rights which do not correspond to any work he performs, which flow from his essential dignity as a person.*

This view leads directly to a high view of parental authority for the direction and care for their child's education, as well as to a high view of worker participation in various social development areas like education.

In terms of political power allocation, this leads to the principle of what is traditionally known as *the principle of subsidiarity,* which has been articulated by such sociologists as Nesbitt, Schumacher and Bella, and which perhaps can best be stated as follows:

> *Power should devolve on the lowest, most local level at which decisions can reasonably be made, with the function of the larger unit being to support and assist the local body in carrying out its tasks.*

What this principle leads to in traditional social theory is a mediating function of social institutions, particularly the school. The school is an independent social institution which is not a political arm for state policy, but an independent institution which seeks to provide a transition role between the individual and the modern mass state. This position has been proposed to be a solution to the 20th century political dilemma which casts all modern debates into a left-wing or statist position and a right-wing or individualist position. In the pluralist political tradition, the mediating structure would be defined as:

> *Those institutions standing between the individual in his private life and the large institutions of public life.* (Berger and Neuhaus, 1977, p. 2)

Given this principled basis, the defense of this particular position does not hinge directly on superbly accurate, academic analysis or impeccably researched evidence from existing models or experiments, nor on an entrepreneurial market profitability. The value of this model is its sociological common sense and its political realizability. The model is also based on another inescapable aspect of human nature – its fallibility. This leads to two political principles. The first of these is that educational policymaking never has a perfect model to work with or an accurate knowledge base for solutions.

> *Through this process of criticism applied to our theories or to our policies, they are improved upon and made more responsive to the world as we find it to be. Usually educational policymaking has only incomplete evidence to go on, especially when it deals with school problems that touch upon important human rights and values, interests, sensitivities, etc.* (Corson, 1992, p. 5)

The major hidden assumption underlying both the public system and the welfare state is problematic. It is the assumption that human beings can rationally plan a massive social system, such as Ontario's education system or something even larger, the national welfare state. Some astute commentators on human nature have pointed out that the likelihood of this rationalistic dream ever being materialized is very remote.

> *Yet academics and politicians of our time overwhelmingly proclaim and practise rationalism. They analyze, categorize, correlate, formulate laws, then explain and predict and therewith attempt to control.* (Eisenberg, 1992, p. 2)

> *And the success rate in all these areas is, in my view abysmal.* (Eisenberg, p. 5)

A similar theme has been argued by another writer, John Rolston Saul, in *Voltaire's Bastards*, where he points out the dilemma of today's political elites:

> *The possession, use, and control of knowledge, have become their central theme – the theme song of their existence. However, their power depends not on the effect with which they use that knowledge, but on the effectiveness with*

> *which they control or choose. Thus, among the illusions which have invested our civilization is an absolute belief that the solution to our problems must be a more determined application of rationally organized expertise. The reality is that our problems are largely the product of that application. The illusion is that we have created the most sophisticated society in the history of man. The reality is that the division of knowledge into feudal fiefdoms of expertise has made general understanding and coordinated action not simply impossible, but despised and distrusted.* (Eisenberg, 1992, p. 8)

Independent School Paradigm: Decoupled

Taking the principles alluded to in the alternate political theory, I describe the basic political paradigm which energizes the independent schools – that schools work best as local institutions able to respond freely to the environmental forces vitalizing the supporting community of that particular school. In a decoupled political environment, the schools have the flexibility to respond to community input without being subjected to external, and generally educationally irrelevant, political controls.

Implied in this is a particular view of collaboration. The view of collaboration espoused here is that significant involvement and authentic effort will be provided *if genuine empowerment is practised* for all the stakeholders in a particular institution. There is a second commonsense corollary: the best way to empower the stakeholders in the school (students, parents, teachers, trustees, supporters) is to provide a social context, an ideological vision, a political culture and a legal structure which actually enables real choices and real decision-making among the stakeholders. Third, although there is an authority structure, its coercive powers are limited. Hence, real cooperation is not only desirable, but necessary.

It has been my experience that human beings are very astute from a young age at determining whether they are being taken seriously or whether they are expected to play an artificial role for somebody else's ambitions. Another way of saying this is a comment by Michael Fullan at the 1992 Restructuring Conference held at OISE:

> *You cannot mandate what matters, in other words, education, because there is always a discrepancy between structure and the culture of schools. In an ideal situation, the culture should push the structure. But in Ontario, there is the attempt to control the culture through the structural legislation. This in effect does not work.*

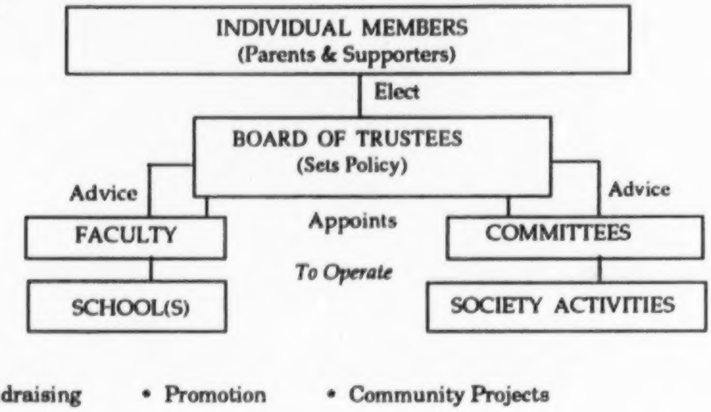
What I propose is an example of an educational culture pushing school structure, and thereby proving that participatory democracy works if there is a coherent educational ideological vision providing the proper content.

Main Characteristics of the TSBM Model

The basic political paradigm, participatory democracy, as explained in the preceeding section, is incorporated in the organizational structure of the local school (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Structure of an Alliance Christian School Society

A. Chart



B. Features

1. The Christian education society is completely independent and is incorporated as a separate organization in the province.
2. The board of directors is elected by the members of the association (not appointed by the church).
3. There is no direct ownership by any church or indirect control by any church councils.
4. Membership in the society is open to all who subscribe to the constitution, creeds and bylaws. Members do not have to have children in the school.
5. Student admission for nonmembers is selective and depends on the faith and lifestyle of the parents, who must be Christian in more than the nominal sense.

The concept of TSBM is taken from the basic operational feature, which is that the school board makes all decisions for its one or two schools. That includes decisions about budget, staff, policy decisions about student admission, curriculum decisions about what is to be taught, transportation decisions about how the students get to school, and it basically means that there are, outside of general legal requirements, no external mandates arising from the state.

The definition of "collaboration" is that a collaborative school is one in which the *majority of persons* are involved in the decision-making process in a significant way. The manner in which this works in the schools associated with CSI is that significant decisions are made in the school board, in the committee structure which advises the school board on policy, by the society of which all parents and other committee members are members, and in the various support activities surrounding extracurricular school events.

This leads to the formal definition of a collaborative school in which teachers and parents together set the educational standards which impact on the students and which are part of the same community as those of the parents and the teachers.

A particular feature of the schools in question is that the corporation which owns and controls the school (schools) is not the state, but also not the church. These schools are owned and operated by corporations made up of societies, which is really an association of parents who organize in a legal structure, which operates the school. It operates the school in a significant fashion by setting all the policies and approving the budget which determines the tuition, which determines the amount of money the parents are going to pay for the education of their children.

Political vetoes. Apart from the involvement in the political structure of the school decision-making process, parents also have two ultimate vetoes which distinguish it from the public school system. First, the parents can remove the children and put them back in a different environment. Second, parents can threaten to withhold tuition payments. This, if done properly, can be an effective way of protesting or calling attention to a particular need or direction in school policy which the parent is not happy with. In effect, there are many ways in which the parent can participate in the direction and control of the school.

Limits to parental control. The schools under study are not totally driven by customer satisfaction ideologies. First, the corporation is incorporated and is usually run through a set of bylaws which detail the structure, the processes and the contract negotiations. Second, many of the negotiations are collective decisions taken by either the membership or the school board and, consequently, an individual parent in a normal sized school is not able to intimidate or blackmail the society. However, even an "average" parent is able to impact the society in various significant ways if it is done properly and persistently over time.

Further, most of the independent schools in this sample, and also other types of independent schools, are members of service organizations which provide a voluntary, but often respected professional voice in the settlement of the disputes and advice about complicated legal and educational matters which may be beyond the normal expertise of the average parent. However, I do stress that the parents in most independent schools are "average" parents. They are not traditional, upper-class, wealthy parents who have lots of time to devote to so-called charitable activities. Most of them have to take on extra work in order to be able to afford the tuition payment for the independent schools. Consequently, the socio-economic distribution of the parents at any given independent school is greater than at any comparable public school.

The Organizational Model

The schools that are members of the OACS prefer to view themselves as a natural, value-based community organization. While all schools in the Alliance as well as those in CSI are organized along the society model illustrated in Figure 1, many independent schools are not organized this way. In fact, the independent school sector exhibits a large range of management types and structures.

In effect, there is not one independent school solution, there are several, and many of them are very pragmatic. However, the political management principles basic to good management are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Organizational Model: Defined Authority Structures

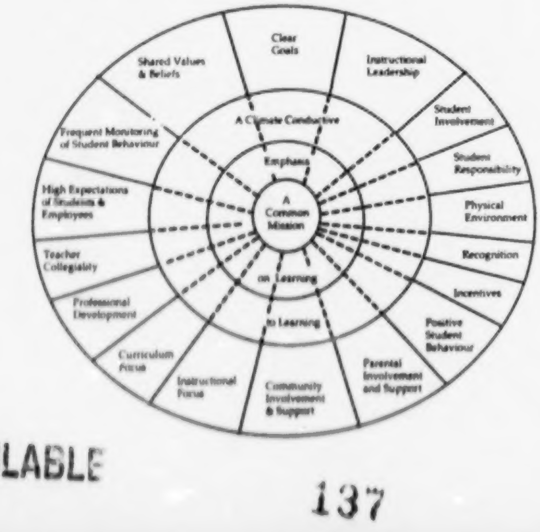
1. The *Society* is constituted by the membership and its official bylaws. It acts collectively in two ways: (1) directly at membership meetings and (2) by delegating authority to the Board of Directors. The society has corporate authority.
2. Organization of the school is directed by a *Board of Directors* through the setting of policy and the hiring of staff subject to the constitutional bylaws of the Society. The board has policy authority.
3. The daily operation of the school(s) is the responsibility of the appointed staff/faculty as directed by the *principal*, subject to board policies. The principal has operational authority.
4. The accountability of the *staff* flows (as defined by contract) through the principal to the board. The staff has professional authority.
5. *Parents* have direct, complete moral and legal authority over their own children, but do not have direct responsibility for program or resources in the school.
6. The *students* are called to participate actively in the schooling process and must be accorded responsibility for learning commensurate with their level of maturity. Students have vocational authority.

In my studies of various independent school types I have found that no particular administrative theory is in vogue. On the whole, I would think that most of the leaders of the independent schools subscribe to one particular administrative vision, articulated by Hodginson and Greenfield. We believe that values, moral and ethics are the very stuff of leadership and administrative life, yet we have no comprehensive theory about them.

> *The central problems of administrative theory are not scientific at all, but philosophical.* (Hodginson, 1991, p. 7)

All community decisions affecting schools are heavily value-laden and once you invite all community members to contribute, they normally want to do so and have their own views on how things should be solved. I think that many of the independent school administrators are committed to another premise about administrative practice. If you are going to operate a school, or bring about any change in a school culture, that must rest on a *normative* conception on what schooling should be (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Effective School Factors



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Educational Culture

What is the bottom line of TSBM? The question is, do these schools actually produce better education as a result of management, or do they produce better education as a result of other social factors? In an academic and scholarly sense, that needs to be researched further. There is very little research available. However, from a practical point of view I can answer it very directly on the basis of my analysis of these schools. It has been our experience that quality education results from the proper coordination of academic and moral purposes of all the stakeholders If the purpose of these schools is clear and focused (most parents and students expect the traditional learning tasks), if the actions of the teachers and the design of the curriculum follow a coherent and clearly specified moral value articulation, if there is an open and collaborative ethos in the school in which teachers and parents matter and students are cared for, then the evidence of the studies and the research on effective school models prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that quality education results.

In the OACS schools, the effective school is officially adopted as the standard for defining quality (Table 3).

Table 3. Effective School Criteria – OACS
A Holistic Model: Planning and Evaluation

The effective Christian school:

1. Is operated by a voluntary society structured according to a comprehensive Charter, bylaws and policies which are implemented following appropriate ethical norms.
2. expresses a clear vision of Christian education;
3. has adequate financial resources to achieve its mission;
4. sets high expectations for instruction;
5. encourages a stimulating learning environment for significant student growth;
6. appoints Christian teachers and encourages professional development;
7. has attractive and adequate facilities for all programs;
8. maintains regular dialogue with parents and supporting community; and
9. has competent leadership from the principal and the board.

Standard: Effective School Model for OACS. The various types of studies about what an effective school is, have drawn similar conclusions. The common characteristics of an effective school are strong leadership, collaborative decision-making, commonly held goals, high academic expectations, rewards for work well done, emphasis on positive student behavior, and close supervision of teacher's work. Effective schools did not dwell on discipline codes and long lists of undesired student behaviors; instead, achievement was celebrated. The teachers worked collaboratively with each other and with the principal. Effective schools also developed close ties to the pupil's parents and with the communities they served.

Many different criteria have been used to judge whether a school is effective. Some studies use criteria where pupils score significantly higher. Others try to clarify the common characteristics of schools where achievements, self-concept and self-reliance of the pupils are measurably better. Others study schools which have a reputation of excellence. Most recently, the focus is on schools that improve over a period of time.

My view is that effectiveness is based on the implementation of a clear, coherent mission, a view that is generally shared in independent schools, even though specific missions vary. Assessment of that effectiveness is usually a multiple factor test.

School Mission. Effective education is enhanced to levels of excellence if the school is based not only on a clear, but on a focused mission. Although difficult to achieve in practice, two examples are: (1) a community of students and teachers dedicated to nurturing the habits of the Christian mind in an interactive environment sensitive to the needs of the whole child and (2) a possible Christian secondary school mission statement, *Developing a disciplined Christian mind as a reflective habit of thought and action.*

This is one area where independent schools have a definite advantage over public schools: they can adopt a clear unambiguous mission and the *Education Act* does not apply.

The Achievement of Quality. Quality is not only a function of vision; it is also a function of *accountability,* as illustrated in the following examples in which the independent schools associated with C.S.I. implement the mission in a fashion that provides direct accountability:

- Student achievement is monitored with internal examinations, participation in external examinations and the occasional participation in Ministry-sponsored reviews.
- The entire operation of the school, including its board performance and management objectives, are evaluated on a cyclical basis every five years by an outside visiting team. This team prepares a report and provides suggestions for improvements for the school.
- Evaluation of teachers is carried out in four ways: peer review, a review by the administrator, a review by an evaluation committee, and a possibility of calling in an external expert if the previous three do not come up with a consistent picture.
- The professional culture in these schools requires that the teachers be certified with either an Ontario Teaching Credential or an equivalent certificate from another jurisdiction. Additional professional training is encouraged, especially in the area of teaching of pedagogy and curriculum development. In addition to general educational perspectives, professional development means various types of activities which will enhance classroom practice and may include peer visits to other classrooms at other schools.

Political Culture

One of the ways to create a collaborative school environment is to make sure that the sources of income for the school board are varied. By corollary, one of the reasons for the imperviousness of the public school system is that all of its money comes from the government. This means that if we use the *Golden Rule,* "he who has the gold rules", it is clear that government ranks much higher in administrative influence than the local community. In the TSBM model this is reversed because all the income comes from local sources. Consequently, board members pay a great deal of attention to local input which comes from membership fees in the society, student attitudes which impact parent willingness to pay, local fundraising networks, attitudes of principal and treasurer in terms of the credibility of the school, influence of local churches through the fact that many churches provide donations for the student tuition assistance funds and the business community which often provides large donations whenever capital projects need funding.

The Collaboration Profile

Table 4 provides a brief overview of the average school participation level in Alliance schools. It is the involvement in the entire decision-making process of the school society that determines whether or not it is a collaborative school. Taking the rule that more than half of the parents and teachers being actively involved in the decision-making process constitutes a collaborative school, the manner in which this is achieved in the average school follows the structure of the society.

Table 4. Collaboration Profile

The average school involves:

1.	Membership – 160 persons/families		
2.	Board – 8-12 persons		
3.	Committees		
	• Education	8	Including principal and vice-principal
	• Public relations	7-10	Including teacher
	• Transportation	5-6	Members
	• Finances	5-6	No staff
	• Salary	6	2 community, 2 board, 2 teachers
	• Maintenance	4-5	Including janitor
	• Planning	3-8	Members
4.	Support Groups		
	• "Willing workers" (Catering)	6-12	Parents
	• School assistants	3-6	Parents, mothers
	• Others	3-25	(Per project) all types
5.	Total		
	• Low figure – ± 66 or 41% persons per year		
	• High figure – ± 94 or 59% of total membership		
6.	Turnovers by Election		
	• Three years – becomes 80% of membership involved		

There are several levels of political involvement:

- Membership in the school society which provides a vote on budgets and policies.
- Election to the board of trustees for three to six years.
- Service on committees, such as education (curriculum), finance (budget, fundraising), personnel (staff, grievance), promotion (public relations), social (activities), maintenance (building, janitorial), development (long-range planning) and transportation (buses).
- Parents may volunteer for specialized activities such as classroom assistant (e.g., handicapped students); trips/supervision; fundraising, coaching sports teams and teaching.
- Everyday activities, such as visiting classes, meeting with teachers and carpooling.

There is a different kind of involvement between those directly involved in the policy-making and those involved in the support activities. In practice, however, there is very little distinction because of the overlap of activities. For example, while members of the Education Committee have direct control over curriculum, they may also participate in the organization of a banquet which would give them another group of other people to talk to. They would then be accessible to other parents for gossip about what is going on in the school or in the articulation of suggestions for what should be proposed at the next board meeting. The various types of interaction make it difficult to say that there are "in" or "out" groups.

Furthermore, there is much work to be done by many people whose positions are limited to three-year terms. This means that there is a large rotation. Even if not all parents become board members, quite a few of them do over the career of their children, and many of them end up on the committees. There is no internal preference system; parents do most things at some point during the time in which they have children in the school.

The minimum in the larger school societies is approximately between 40% and 50% of the parents participating in significant policy-related activities to 80% or 90% participation in the smaller societies, where virtually all the parents are involved in everything. However, it is clear from even a cursory examination that significant involvement is almost a necessity.

A financial profile (Table 5) is provided to give an indication of what an average school would look like in terms of money. Some salient features are:

- A comfortable teaching situation is anything between 6-20 teachers and a family base between 50-150 families. Anything below that requires vast amounts of work and anything above tends to become too large a social mass for most parents to feel comfortable in.
- The pupil-teacher ratio which is recommended by the Alliance as an official policy is 1 to 20, which has been found to work exceedingly well.
- The budget breakdowns, which work in practice, are as indicated. The income sources are standard across the system; so is the cost, which can be calculated on either a per-student or per-family basis.

Table 5. School Profile (Elementary)

1.	Students	150
2.	Teachers (including principal and vice-principal)	8
3.	Classrooms (plus ancillary)	8
4.	Buses	3
5.	Families	70
6.	Budget	$450,000
	• Salaries	70%
	• School supplies	4%
	• Building/maintenance	10%
	• Administration	6%
	• Transportation	9%
	• Other	1%
7.	Income Sources	
	• Tuition	63%
	• Donations	30%
	• Fees	2%
	• Fundraising	5%
8.	Costs	
	• Student	$3,000
	• Family	$5,500

One of the features of the schools related to Christian Schools International is that most schools charge on a per-family basis. This is advantageous for larger families and makes it possible for them to afford any independent schools. This particular feature is probably not economically rational, but it is part of a Christian compassionate ethos which encourages families to share one another's burdens. In effect, the parents with one child in the school subsidize those with five children in the school. This is simply one additional way of encouraging an interactive and sharing community attitude.

Strengths of the TSBM Model

All phases of the operation, summarized here, are educational and interactive:

Responsive. Accountability is direct to several stakeholder groups.

Efficient. The budget is detailed, sent to each parent, and voted upon at public meetings each year. Budget increases must be justified annually because they lead to tuition increases. Hence, a built-in stewardship factor.

Informed. Stakeholders are sent all relevant information for their activities.

Involvement. is created through (1) identification with mission and vision of the school, (2) opportunity to influence policy affecting own children, and (3) interest in educational issues.

Student significance. Students know they count and they usually identify with the school's mission. This does not mean they always cooperate. Teachers know students and families on a long-term basis and parents know teachers.

Coherent school culture. The principle concept is that integrity leads to excellence. Value coherence is maintained in three ways: (1) curriculum – consistent values over time, (2) morality – supported by parents, known by students, and (3) behavior – enforced by all stakeholders in the community.

Teacher empowerment. Open environment for pedagogical innovation: curriculum – local inputs, teacher-designed; styles – personal idiosyncrasies tolerated by the community; innovation – encouraged if practical and not expensive; collaboration – direct access to administrators and trustees.

Community model. Natural flexibility and continuous interaction mark a non-coercive, non-hierarchical structure.

Parent empowerment. Individuals count and each family is expected to grow personally by acquiring: (1) organizational experience – productive cooperation in committees, (2) advocacy skills – values of school and family need constant refinement, and (3) information – education about schools as children advance.

Weak Points of the Independent Model

Role of the principal. His role is very complex in a decoupled model. The principal is exposed to many expectations and is not safeguarded by the bureaucratic structures of the state.

Teacher risks exist as well. The resources and technology for innovations are often not available. The incentives for professional development are low, due to finances, while expectations are very high.

Student risks. There are very few as they are important persons in the scheme of things.

Parent risks. Time and energy is required to participate in operating a school. Not all families can manage this, but most manage to do it on top of church obligations.

Incompetence. Volunteers often create bottlenecks and extra work for the staff. Democracy can be frustrating.

Dominant personalities. This is not a frequent problem because authority is dispersed, hence there is no single point at which total control exists. Further, community consensus is slow but sure about individuals hogging the limelight.

Financial restraint. Due to Ontario's nonfunding policy, independent schools operate with many fewer resources.

Conclusion

While the schools highlighted in this paper have existed for more than 40 years, much research needs to be done so that accurate comparisons with other types makes sense. I offer some recommendations:

- Encourage more research on TSBM models. All models need to be investigated, both those inside various public school systems and those outside the system.
- The independent model is worth investigating now because many of these independent schools have survived successfully for over 100 years in spite of the uneven playing field created by public policy.
- It should be included as a legitimate option for school choice in all provinces, but especially in Ontario, where political consensus seems to be a fashionable way of avoiding education reform.
- Maximizing school choice is good for education and democracy because it shows that we take the values we preach seriously.
- SBM may be the wave of the future in an open global environment, when flexibility and focus are the real and necessary options.

References

Bascia, N. (1992) *Caught in the Crossfire: Restructuring and the Problem School.* Toronto: OISE Press.

Berger, D. & Neuhaus, R. (1977) *To Empower People.* Washington: AEIPPR.

Corson, D. (1992) *Implementing School Site Governance in a Multi-ethnic School.* Toronto: OISE Press.

Eisenberg, J. (1992) *The Limits of Rationality.* Toronto: OISE Press.

Hodginson, C. (1991) *Educational Leadership: The Moral Art.* New York: SUNYP.

Holmes, M. (1992) *Religion and the Restructuring of Schools.* Toronto: OISE Press.

Lander, R. (1992) *Decentralization: The Case of Sweden.* Toronto: OISE Press.

Lawton, S. (1992) *Restructuring Educational Systems and School-based Management.* Toronto: OISE Press.

Lewington, J. & Orpwood, G. (1993) *Overdue Assignment.* Toronto: John Wiley & Sons.

Lewis, D. (1993) Deinstitutionalization and school decentralization: Making the same mistake twice. In Hannaway, J. & Carnoy, M. (Eds.), *Decentralization and School Improvement.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Pulishers.

Sarason, S. (1991) *The Predictable Failure of Educational Reform.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Tyack, D. School governance in the United States: Historical puzzles and anomalies. In Hannaway and Carnoy, op. cit.

Finding the Common Ground

Gordon Cressy
Metro-Toronto Learning Partnerships

A Parable

There lived on a farm a hen and a pig who, as good friends, talked to each other. One day they decided to do something they had never done before: to take a major risk. They ventured off the farm to explore the surrounding neighborhood. Down the road by the village church they saw a sign, *Here to help the poor.* Contemplating the sign, the hen and the pig decided there must be something they could do. After all, they had a good life: the farmer always treated them nicely, the other animals were pleasant company and all the people they came in contact with were gentle towards them – they had a positive sense of community. But what could they do – they had no money. After a little while the hen turned to the pig and said, "I've got a marvelous idea. Let's donate bacon and eggs." The pig thought about that. And finally he screwed himself up on his four little legs, looked at the hen and said, "Well, that's fine for you, it's just a contribution. But for me it's a total commitment."

In this paper I discuss the difference between contribution and commitment.

Dreaming and Doing

The theme for what I call dreaming and doing to find the common ground is from T. Lawrence *(Seven Pillars of Wisdom)*:

> *All people dream but not equally. Those who dream at night in the dusty recesses of their mind awake to find it was vanity; but the dreamers of the day are dangerous people for they may act their dreams with open eyes to make it happen.*

I will take you on a personal journey, over a 30-year period, to share some of my learnings. In the 1960s, I was what you would call a *grassroots community organizer,* whether as a CUSO volunteer in Trinidad in The West Indies, as a youth worker on the south side of Chicago, as an administrator of half-way houses in Toronto or as a community organizer. In the second decade I tried to confront and polarize systems – to take action. I concluded that the way to accomplish my goal was to evoke change from within the system. I spent a decade as a school trustee, as a chairperson of a board of education and as a city politician. At the same time I reflected on some of the learnings and taught courses such as *School and the Community* and *Decision Making in Urban Education*. In the last 10 years, as president of the Toronto United Way campaign and as a vice-president of the University of Toronto, I became in charge of systems from the administrative side. I have now returned to where I began, as founding President of the Learning Partnership, whose mandate is to bring together community and business groups with public and separate boards of education.

I have concluded: if we don't get it right when children are young it doesn't matter what we do at the higher education level. As one who has spent a lot of time fundraising I notice a decided shift is occurring – attention is moving to the elementary schools from higher education. The largest philanthropic gift ever was in December 1993 in the United States, when Walter Annenberg gave $500 million to public education. A change is occurring in society and people are finally understanding it.

Before embarking on our journey we have to know where we are at the moment; as we move through the mid 1990s I offer you a sense of some of my perceptions of where we are today .

First, it is very clear that *the money has run out*: the days of all things, to all people, at all times is over. Today, holding on to what you have is a victory. In my generation it was always felt by kids, by teachers and by parents that if one stayed in school, did well and went on to university one would get a good job and be successful in life. Although educators would deny this, claiming it was not the value base, it nonetheless was what was felt. Today there are no guarantees. Approximately 25% of last year's graduates from the University of Toronto in the faculties of social work and law are employed.

Second, an important and fundamental sociological principle is: *people like people who do good works and are poorly paid*. An amendment to this principle is: *people do not like people who do good works and are better paid than they are*. The effect of these principles on education was a shift from automatic respect to respect having to be earned. Respect has to be earned for parents and it has to be earned for teachers. This was a fundamental shift.

The third shift involves our children: *young people want it now; they need it now*. The advertising industry has proven that. McDonald's restaurants have been in operation for 28 years; sociological studies are done of single-parent families eating at McDonald's on Saturday mornings. It's fascinating to understand that. If we are loosing the battle, we are losing it as much around the dining room table as we are in the classroom. People do not have family dinners any more. McDonald's, with its arches, is a commercial with symbols that even a two-year old child recognizes. Children understand that very early.

The fourth change that has taken place is in the area of *family life*. In Ontario in 1964, 1 in 26 marriages ended in divorce; in 1994, 38% of marriages will end in divorce. Studies show that parents spend 30% less time with their children today than they did 30 years ago. The vulnerable groups in our society are the young and the old; youth were in favour with society in the 1960s, the elderly were in favour in the 1980s. We need to look at these phenomena in terms of the education and health budgets. In the 1990s both groups are in trouble because the money has run out. Today in Los Angeles, California, over 30% of the children are enrolled in private schools. It is important to note, if the middle class leaves the public school system, then democracy is in trouble because the public school system is the cornerstone of democracy – it is the cornerstone of the neighborhood.

Finding the Common Ground

Those are some of the facts at play that bring me to the common ground. I suspect, underlying all this, is that: when the economy is suffering, education becomes the scapegoat for society's failures; when times are good, education is viewed as the place of upward mobility.

The final change, particularly in the community I know best, is the change of who is going to school. This change has been so fast and so dramatic that most educational systems have not yet been able to deal with it and the workplace has not been able to process what is happening. The Toronto Board of Education indicated that by the year 2000, 70% of their student body will be composed of visible minorities. If immigration were to be frozen, which it will not be, and if the birth rate of every group outside of the Anglo-Saxon population continues to increase, then the Anglo-Saxon population will continue to decline. The changes, therefore, that are occurring are so fast and so dramatic that the people in attendance at this Education and Community Conference do not reflect the student population one iota. In 20 years, the community leadership will be very different than it is today; in fact, it already is in terms of who is the president of a local student council.

At the University of Toronto, students of Chinese origin comprise over 20% of the population and in several faculties the numbers are significantly higher. Indications are that these numbers will increase 35% by the year 2005. The changes are all in place.

Currently, the major concern in education is violence in the schools. Not just at the local level but on a national level. The Director of Education of the Toronto Board, Joan Green, explains: *When the water hole shrinks the animals look at each other differently.* The luxury of enemies, which was one of our defining factors as a society, is gone. We will either consume one another or we will rebuild our communities. In the school system we will either be driven on the fear, security, law and order, policing side or we will be delivered on the hope, challenge, excitement, thrust. If all of our energy is expanded on the fear side we will be in trouble on the hope side.

In the 1960s, key words were: *innovation, flexibility, risk-taking, Hall-Dennis Report, joy of learning.* Key words of this decade are: *retrenchment, cutbacks, lay-offs, holding on to what you've got.* Words of the 1960s were liberating; words of the 1990s are confining. At precisely the time we need creativity at a level that has not previously existed, is the time when most people get tight, insecure and afraid to be innovative. However, we have no choice – we have to try out new ideas.

What have I learned? I learned that the important principle of the 1960s was that *you connect with community by starting where people are at.* In the mid-1960s, at a time of great racial strife, as part of my field placement, I was working on the south side of Chicago, Illinois in an all black agency. Martin Luther King had moved north to Chicago; Jessie Jackson was in Chicago; a group called The Black Stone Rangers was very strong. Coming to this all black agency, the Elliot Donnelley Youth Center, I explained to the executive director, "I'm here to help. I'm very keen, I'm enthusiastic. I'm concerned about race relations. I studied at Lawrence Park Collegiate in north Toronto where we liked to help people. I've read some things, and I'm here to help." He looked me squarely in the eyes and said, "Mr. Cressy, we have an enormous problem in this neighborhood with veneral disease and I'd like you to wipe it out." Returning to my dormitory I thought very hard about this and remembered that in grades 11 and 12 we used to have these wonderful movies, from the National Film Board of Canada, on family life studies. I thought that if I showed one of these movies to the young people on the south side of Chicago, then Canada could be dealing with this really important issue. I ordered the movie *Dance Little Children*. I brought together about 40 young people between the ages of 14 and 17 from the youth center and from the YMCA and the YWCA to view the movie. It was a movie about a dance, a couple who left the dance and went to the boy's parents' house. The boy's parents were not home that night. We saw some wonderful footage of the house and then the couple went into the bedroom. Being the 1960s the camera did not go in with them as it would today, but at any rate, we figured out what was happening. The couple left the house, they returned to the dance. After a few weeks, this young fellow discovered a sore on his penis. He went to see his doctor who made a diagnosis, indicating that if he could learn who the contact source was he could deal with the problem. The movie faded out on the dance as the lights went on. I turned to the young audience, asking if they got the message. A fellow at the back of the room, with a big grin on his face, put up his hand and said, "Yes sir. It's very clear. The white kids can't dance! We knew the sex part." This was a very important lesson to me and one that I have never forgotten: *Unless we connect with people where they are at we will not make real and lasting connections, built on strengths of the people.*

To take this one step further. When I served as president of the Toronto United Way campaign it was an Anglo-Saxon organization: the board were all members of the Anglo-Saxon community. I was determined to change the organization to better reflect the community at-large. I went out to a friend of mine in the Chinese community, Dr. Joseph Wong. Dr. Wong had led the fight in 1980 in Toronto on a CTV program, *Campus Giveaway,* which basically claimed the Chinese were taking "our" places at the university. It showed some students of Chinese origin. Ironically, all of those students were Canadian citizens! Eventually, due to demands from those people who Joseph Wong organized, CTV apologized. I went to Joseph as a friend, requesting he come on to the board of the United Way. He declined, explaining that the United Way was not serving his community. He offered to have a meeting with the board chairman and the head of the campaign to discuss the problem. He requested the meeting be held in the Chinese community and be conducted in Cantonese, with translators provided by the Chinese community. When I approached our board with this proposal, their reaction was: "Do you mean to bring people in we have to go out?" We went out and we listened and, out of it, Joseph and two others came on the board, and a number of Chinese agencies became part of the United Way. By the fourth year the Chinese community felt terrific about the United Way: they wanted to organize a walk. There were 300 people participating in the walk that year; last year there were 13,000 people walking, raising $300,000 for the United Way. Joseph Wong remained on the board; in 1992 he was appointed chairman and last year he was honoured with an Order of Canada and an honorary doctorate from the University of Toronto. In effect, someone came in and all of a sudden was not just at the table – he became a part of the head table and took charge.

Go out, bring people in – find the common ground.

Building Allies

For too long, we in education have talked to each other about how tough it is. The days of the moaners, groaners, whiners and complainers are over – no one is listening. It is self-interest that will drive us this decade; we need to find where the self-interest is that brings people together.

As chair of a board of education, I talked about the difference between community involvement and community control. I talked about how you make that happen in a meaningful way – so that parents would feel involved in the action; how taxpayers who do not have children in the school system, although they are paying over 50% of the bill, can feel a part of the educational community. I approached principals, because they in many ways are the agents of change, to start talking to their community members.

I recall a principal who came to me declaring that he had, indeed, made an overture but that it was a terrible experience. For the first time since his appointment, he visited the local senior citizens' home and spoke with the administrator. The administrator informed the principal that he did not think much of the school: the children come out of school running across the lawn of the senior citizens' home stomping on the flowers, they dress poorly, their language is very bad. And not only that, but 80% of the people living in the home are women, some of them former teachers who subsist on low pensions. I offered the principal some advice: ask, *what can we do to help?*

When the principal returned, he said the most amazing thing happened. They had a lunch together and started to communicate. The administrator noted that the residents are all on fixed incomes and one of the problems for the women, very frankly, was where to get their hair done. The nearest beauty parlor was a distance away, fairly expensive, and not all of the women were able to use public transit. The principal realized there was a hairdressing program at the school. Two weeks later the people from across the street were having their hair done free of charge! The school decided they could afford to put a chair into the senior citizens' home for those who were disabled and could not come across the street. The kids were having a good time – they were being thanked and appreciated for a free haircut. They were talking to each other – young people talking to older people! Not only that, they were learning. One 16-year old young woman was amazed, "You know, that woman was a nurse in China with Dr. Norman Bethune and we're studying about that. She lives right across the street! We had no idea." The seniors discovered they could eat lunch at the school much more cheaply than anywhere else; some of the seniors decided to tutor students in math. The youth started to visit. People made friends.

The next year, when it came time for budget cuts, teachers came to the school board and requested that the budget not be cut because it would hurt the children! School trustees thought it was an interesting point. In support, three busloads of seniors came from the home – seniors always vote! We listened, as trustees.

First you earn and then you ask for help; you do not get it as a right.

Approaching Business

In my most radical times I was an opponent to business – as a concept, to executives and corporate agenda. I have moved, partially due to economics but partially because I have learned another important lesson: *all people in business are not bad. All people in education are not good*. The issue is to find soulmates and to form partnerships.

Although business has been viewed as being critical of public education, until now they have stayed on the sidelines. At a gathering of business people in Toronto, Joan Green, Director of Education for the Toronto Board of Education was unknown. This board of education has 16,000 employees, a budget of $800 million, and 236 buildings. Don't you think the Director is a *business* person? And neither did Joan Green know people in the business community. They started to meet, seeking a common ground and looking for areas of tension. At the end of the year they realized that although there was common ground, there were some problems on language: business people tend to talk about winners, but when there are winners there are also losers.

In its pursuit of help, education was ready to break down the barriers. But how do you break down barriers? Last year the Ms. Foundation, located in New York City, started a program, *Take Your Daughter to Work*. It was covered across the media and everybody's daughter was announcing the news. All of a sudden you saw what was happening: there were people in the work place who had previously never been there. Children were with their parents; if there wasn't a parent who had a job they worked with a co-op student. This led to job shadowing, and to more co-op experiences. We have started to take that idea to Toronto, taking a youth to work. Next fall, every grade 9 student in Metro Toronto will be in the work place for a day. During Education Week we should do the reverse: take an adult to school! That's good for people who are not parents. See the school!

What I discovered with business leaders is that when they come into the school for a day, they invariably go away impressed. We will take taxpayers into the schools who have not been there for 20 years. Once you see it you start to do it and one can then move from interest to commitment.

Partnership

One of the hopeful signs of combining community, business, labour, and the schools will be the realization by business leaders that schools are all *our* business: schools are too important to be left to the teacher without making resources available. So the teacher will become more of a manager, announcing, "Here's the kind of people I need to help me in doing my job." As people become secure in themselves, change will be able to take place.

We might even discover some of the training done for our educators must change. This summer we are creating a summer institute for families of schools that will be jointly conducted by businesss and education around the culture of change. The entry fee does not require money – it will be a commitment to stay the course and to keep working as a group. Included will be the principal, a couple of teachers, a parent or two and the caretaker. We are going to work together.

There are several ventures we have begun to work on. I have been meeting with groups of educators whom I have not seen for many years. When we last met, they were teachers; now they are principals or superintendents and a few are directors of education. What they are saying is: We understand this, but it was never a part of our job description. We know that we need to work together. We also know that unless we can measure what we do we are not going to get support. Today, what gets measured, gets done. If we are driving for mediocrity we will achieve it; if we are grinding the system down, we are in more trouble. The issue is, how do we build it up? We do so in a number of ways.

Externally, to build up the system, we start with the media which have, historically, been viewed as critics rather than as friends. *Toronto Life* magazine last summer ran an article, *Why the middle class is leaving the public system.* The actual data, however, show that this is not happening. If it were, where are the hundreds of new private schools? They are not there. Four percent of our population are enrolled in the private schools. *Toronto Life* neglected to include information about students who have returned to the public schools. *The Toronto Star* was viewed as a critic; they put a person, full-time, into Jarvis Collegiate who is going to be there for six months and then he is going to talk about school as it is. We have to *earn* it with the media – for them to be defenders and supporters of the public school system. The way to accomplish this is to bring them in to see what is going on, and start to celebrate what is exciting. *McLeans,* the Canadian national magazine, will have an article about public education. Their focus in the past has been on universities and the ranking of universities.

Business in the 1990s realizes the importance of doing good work in public because of its value in image enhancement. The Toronto Board of Education and Pepsi Cola recently struck a deal, one that the Board to my mind did not negotiate very well. It was not a partnership; it was strictly a business deal. Two issues were involved: (1) ethics and (2) money. The Toronto Board of Education was unaware that Pennsylvania State University had cut a deal with Pepsi Cola for $15 million (U.S.); the Toronto Board of Education struck it for $1 million (Canadian)! That was no partnership. In a partnership there is something of value for both parties.

We are planning on creating a mentoring system for young people in Metropolitan Toronto, to be targeted in a variety of ways. We plan to use the model of the United Way, which in effect went into the workplace declaring, *we want people to help.* We have 1,200 engineers who want to be mentors to young people. They are recruited, they are trained. There are approximately 20,000 engineers in Ontario, only a small percentage of whom are female. Of the 1,200 trained volunteers, 500 are female. Who stepped forward first? The women.

Understand, therefore, that part of this whole issue has to do with gender. If we look at the real game in education, it is the ages between 0 and 4 that are important. It is one of the four priority areas we have identified, i.e., readiness for school readiness. Our business partners admit that although it is a critical issue, they want to work on dropouts. Why don't men want to work on readiness? Business men? They did not change diapers, they are not comfortable with little children. So what it means is that children from single-parent families, mother-led families who are poor, do not get a positive role model until age 10 because there are virtually no men teaching between JK and grade 3 today, and there are virtually no men going into teaching. Do understand that gender is part of this issue and we therefore have to get men who are in senior positions into the schools and to start to talk about it.

There is an interesting model starting to emerge through Frontier College, one of the grand programs of the literacy movement, which started in the rural railway yards where originally a lot of people were immigrants. A few years ago, they started to do volunter work with the children in kindergarten and grades 1 and 2. Somebody realized this was all well and good, but they were not staying the course. They started in areas like Regent Park and Jane/Finch to work with mothers on literacy. And the mothers would get other mothers together.

In mentoring, we have decided to look at specific areas. As an example, we will concentrate on black, male youth in metropolitan Toronto. We know the statistics indicate they do not move through the system very well. We know from studies done in demographics and on role models that most of their role models come from athletics and entertainment, which are narrow career paths.

Going into the workplace seeking black role models we approached Richard Barton, CEO of Xerox, who said, "Look, everybody wants me to be a role model. If I'm a role model for everybody, I won't do a good job at Xerox. If I do a good job at Xerox, then I'm a good role model. I do, however, have a lot of black employees who would be pleased to be part of this program if we encouraged them."

Aetna Life Insurance Company set up a program encouraging employees to serve their community. The president of the company encouraged employees to be involved in community service. In the first year only 50% of the employees became involved in the initiative; thereafter, participation became a requirment for all new employees. What they discovered, however, was that after the first year when it was no longer mandatory, they had a 94% participation rate – people who had had a good experience started to stay the course. This is what we mean by building community, about mentoring.

An entrepreneurial, adventure program will be put into place in K-4 in the Metro Toronto schools this fall. (The model used in the U.S. in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and in Oregon is a for-profit-emergent program.) Basically, it will be on a working-together community-service model. The skills we want young people to have are going to sustain them for the course of their lives. We will approach the local branches, be they banks or trust companies, for support. The CEO of today, understanding the need for community involvement, will meet with the principals to ascertain where they can work together. That makes good sense. That is what community is all about. We anticipate introducing reports for our children – very few schools have annual reports. The annual school report (printed by the print shop) will include comments from the principal, teachers and parents and will declare: here is our school – here is what we do – here are our students – here are our programs – here is how we did last year – here is how we want to do next year. We will do it via accountability and outcome.

By this process, in effect, the community becomes the defender and the supporter of the cause rather than the enemy. That is what building allies is about. Because in the building of allies in terms of the cause of education, particularly public education, we have a strong force that is dealing with a government which is critical of it.

During my years of running half-way houses and living-in with youth (in those days we used to live-in – there were no eight-hour shifts), I came to a very important conclusion: people like group homes. The further away the homes are from where the people live, the more they like them! We had just eight boys in a little house in the east end of Toronto. The neighbors hated us so I decided to go and talk to all them. Nothing was accomplished by this, although I did learn some interesting facts.

The first thing was, we had the best garbage on the street! Our garbage was always packed very neatly – there wasn't stuff strewn all over the lawn. Our lawn was always cut and we had flowers growing in our garden. Our image was good, but still the neighbors did not like us. After deliberating on the problem we came up with a plan. At the first snowstorm of the season we had our youth up early in the morning, which was not easy; we shoveled the snow from the whole block! We shoveled everyone's walk and then we stood waiting with anticipation on our porch as people went out to get their newspapers. They looked out and saw that their walk was shoveled. And they looked over to us and we were all smiling – hard to smile early in the morning, but we were all smiling. They then had to figure out what to do. They could take the snow off the lawn and put it back on the walk and shovel it again. Or they could say thank you – and they did.

The second thing that we did took place in the spring when there was a garbage strike. (One thing we have learned about garbage strikes is they never occur in the winter because garbage freezes; in the spring and summer it smells!) We had a van. We went and talked to our neighbors, offered to pick up everyone's garbage and take it down to the dump. All this does not mean that we did not have problems. We did have problems, but the neighbors became our allies because we had earned it.

The issue for me is: Can we take stands that will serve to unite with the community on issues important to them so that they will be our allies? Eventually business will also be our allies because they have come to understand that a community that works is good for business.

What brings business and labour to become allies is that they, too, are parents. If there is anything that is an incentive for parents, it is that they all want their children to have the best opportunities in life. Recently, as parents, my wife and I were invited to attend a music concert at 9:00 a.m., to be held at the local public school. Music concert – 9:00 a.m. – Friday morning – we would like you to attend. We were there as were half of the parents; the other half of the parents were not present. After the concert I approached the teacher: as half of the parents were not able to attend, would you consider having a concert in the evening? However, if it makes sense, to have a concert at 9:00 in the morning, then companies will need to release their employees at 9:00 in the morning because this is important for society. If the workplace is going to be a source of mentors then it needs to allow flexibility for working people. I also suggested a family pot luck supper just for our children's class and offered to obtain space, without charge, at the University of Toronto. Subsequently, a couple of parents who worked with IBM arranged for a donation of some computers for the classroom. *We start little to go big.* The grand schemes of life are grand schemes; the little flames are where the victories are going to come from.

Let us suggest to companies that their newsletters be utilized as information mediums: *How To Be A Better Parent Today*. First: stay home. The CEO of a business needs to do it as much as the mother in Regent Park. When I was involved the United Way we had fancy fundraising dinners which most people agreed were over-saturated. Too many dinners! We had a new idea, the *Stay-Home Night* – pay your money and stay at home. People loved it! They could stay home; it proved to be a most successful fundraiser.

I grew up in the Lawrence Park area, in Toronto where 89% of the youth went on to higher education. I worked for 15 years in Regent Park; over the last 40 years in Regent Park, 4% of the youth have gone on to higher education, 96% did not. With all the interventions we have made in Regent Park – in reading programs, in nutrition programs and other programs – only 4% of these children have gone on to higher education. Starting at home, therefore, seems to me to be a crucial link. Making the workplace a group that feels responsible to our schools also makes good sense.

Bringing educators to a point of admitting: "We need help, we are ready to take help, we want it put on our agenda, we are going to drive the bus", makes sense. The involvement has to be real and relevant for people to stay with it. As we put this partnership together, with all of the suspicion around it, we ask what are the issues?

Four Key Issues

Educators agreed that The Learning Partnership would concentrate on four issues: (1) retention and dropouts and what we could do in that area; (2) the issues of pre-school preparation in the 0-4 age group and leveling the playfield; readiness points of transition; (3) science and technology, particularly as a career path for young women in grades 3, 4 and 5 (we will be starting summer camps, for girls in grades 3, 4 and 5 around engineering, bringing in the best professors); and (4) literacy for young people.

Where will the funds come from? How will we begin? We are going to be in the field of action – we are going to operate in a *damn and do it* mode. We will aim clearly in the direction of the targets that we are going after. With these designs in mind, we went to people requesting seed money: $10,000 to get us started. Right off 45 people said yes: boards of education, universities – the University of Toronto, York University, Ryerson University – banks and insurance companies. One bank came in unsolicited – the Hong Kong Bank of Canada, headquartered in Vancouver. The Hong Kong Bank explained their interest in the program: public education is the public policy issue of the 1990s. Much more than health, much more than social service, much more than higher education. Public education is the public policy issue of the 1990s and it is the foundation of democracy

In April 1994 there will be a launching conference, with approximately 800 people from business and education who will focus on partnerships. The president of the Bank of Montreal and the director of the Toronto Board on Education will speak about finding the common ground; the co-chairs of the Royal Commisioner of Learning will introduce their early reflections. Most important, we will have partnerships that are in place and working.

We have virtually the smallest staff on the planet. We have three people. That's our total organization. But we have volunteers coming from everywhere – senior citizens and co-op students. People are coming because they are believing in what we are doing. We have no money to allocate as our money only covers our budget. However, one thing I like to do is to ask people for things. A very important lesson I learned about fund raising: when you ask people for something you are doing them a favour. Don't ever feel guilty as you are giving them a chance to participate in the action. We discovered that Canada Post had taken over the old Eaton Tower with a 15-year lease and they were not using all the space. Their number one issue is literacy. Literacy is one of our issues. I do not have any problem thanking Canada Post for their contribution because it makes sense. It is not Coca-Cola sponsoring a breakfast nutrition program; that does not make sense. It is crucial to make sure the partnerships make sense; if they do not, you say, "Sorry, but how about this idea?" And more often than not they will come to the table!

As you go out, bring people in, win allies, *earn it first and then stay the course* because it will start to turn. It will be viewed as a hopeful sign, as part of rebuilding community. It will start to bring people together. It will bring a sense of pride, passion and professionalism back to educators and it will earn respect. Determine who can do the job best because it will not always be you or me. When I went to the United Way I asked 11 people, who all said no, to chair the campaign. They all agreed it was a very important position but that they were too busy. They invariably offered the services of the vice-president of human resources who was scheduled to retire the following year. How are you going to do well when, in effect, the top person refuses to be part of the game? I then approached the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, John Aird, who agreed to help – because he liked my father! He said, "Gordon, you're a very nice fellow but you have no clout with these people. We are going to take another approach. I am going to their offices with the Premier - and you can come along." We would go to someone's office – the Premier, the Lieutenant Governor, four chief executive officers and I! All of a sudden the situation changed. Influential CEOs in town started to say yes, and they in turn became part of the request. I remember, we went to visit one CEO who put up his hands and said, "I don't know what it is, I give up, I'll do it."

Last year Bill Tetherington, CEO of IBM, headed the United Way campaign; this year it will be Al Flood, CEO of the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce; next year it will be John Cassidy, CEO of CTV. Three people have been identified as a potential chair of the 1996 campaign. Each candidate will be interviewed to determine why they should get the job to chair as a volunteer of the United Way in 1996!

Think about repositioning, from begging someone to help to *this is the most important thing you can do*. That is what we have to make the people feel. And then we have got to thank them and recognize them. Sometimes we thank them on their own turf; sometimes we thank them on our turf. We give people jackets and buttons and other items like that; sometimes we go to their annual meetings and publicly thank them. That makes people feel good.

In Closing

> *All people dream but not equally. Those who dream at night in the dusty recesses of their mind awake to find that it was vanity. But the dreamers of the day are dangerous people for they may act their dreams with open eyes to make it happen.*

My final words are the words of Lao Tzu, the Chinese philosopher who, centuries ago, said this about young people:

> *Go to the young people. Live with them and love them. Start with what they know and build on what they have. But of the best leaders, when their job is done, the task accomplished, the young people all say, 'we did it ourselves.'*

We are talking about people's roots and wings to fly. The only way we will make that happen is by doing it together.

Appendix

8th Annual International Research-Practice Conference
EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY:
THE COLLABORATIVE SOLUTION

THURSDAY, March 3

4:30 - 6: 30 p.m.	Registration - Main Floor	
6:30 p.m.	PLENARY SESSION - Welcome ***ARTHUR KRUGER,*** Director, OISE ***STEVE LAWTON,*** Chair Department of Educational Administration, OISE Introduction of Speaker ***RICHARD TOWNSEND,*** Conference Co-chair Department of Educational Administration, OISE	
	KEYNOTE ADDRESS ***JAMES CIBULKA,*** University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee ***Policy Options for Building School-Community Relations***	Room 2-212
	Reception following (cash bar) - 2nd Floor Lounge	

FRIDAY, March 4

8:00 - 8:30 a.m.	Registration - Main Floor; Coffee - 2nd Floor Lounge	
8:30 - 9:45 a.m.	PLENARY SESSION ***GORDON CRESSY,*** Director, Metro-Toronto Learning Partnerships ***Finding the Common Ground***	Room 2-212
9:45 - 10:15 a.m.	Refreshment Break - 2nd Floor Lounge	
10:15 - 11:30 a.m.	PARALLEL SESSIONS A1 - A4	
11:30 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.	Lunch - (available in cafeteria, 5th Floor, OISE)	
12:45 - 2:00 p.m.	PARALLEL SESSIONS B1 - B4	
2:00 - 3:15 p.m.	PARALLEL SESSIONS C1 - C4	
3:15 - 3:45 p.m.	Refreshment Break - 2nd Floor Lounge	
3:45 - 5:00 p.m.	PLENARY SESSION ***BENJAMIN LEVIN,*** University of Manitoba ***Education Looks at Poverty: Conceptions & Misconceptions***	Room 2-212
Evening Free		

SATURDAY, March 5

7:30 - 8:30 a.m.	Coffee - 2nd Floor - 2nd Floor Lounge	
8:30 - 9:45 a.m.	PLENARY SESSION ***NANCY CHAVKIN,*** Southwest Texas State University ***Families & Schools Working Together in a Pluralistic Society***	Room 2-212
9:45 - 10:15 a.m.	Refreshment Break - 2nd Floor Lounge	
10:15 - 11:30 a.m.	PARALLEL SESSIONS D1 - D4	
11:30 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.	PLENARY SESSION ***NORMAN ROBINSON,*** Simon Fraser University ***Reaching Education's Publics***	Room 2-212
12:45 p.m.	Closing Comments	

• • • • • • • • •

PARALLEL SESSIONS

FRIDAY, March 4 10:15 - 11:30 a.m.

A1 **SHIHUI WANG,** Department of Educational Administration, OISE
4-482 *Minority Parents' Views on Public School Systems in Ontario: A Chinese Perspective*

A2 **RON McDONALD,** Marystown Secondary School, Newfoundland
4-412 *Stakeholder Attitudes Towards Community Involvement in New Brunswick Schools: Implications for the Collaborative Solution*

A3 **PETER BUTLER,** Scarborough Board of Education
2-212 *The Scarborough Experience: Organizing a Citywide Conference for Parents*

A4 **MURRAY QUINN,** Hamilton Board of Education
4-413 *Creating a Race Relations Policy: A Board and Community Partnership*

PARALLEL SESSIONS

FRIDAY, March 4 12:45 - 11:30 a.m.

B1 **MIKE McKENNA & ARLENE WRIGHT,** Grey County Board of Education
4-412 *Balancing Participative and Representative Democracy–The Grey County Approach*

B2 **RICHARD TOWNSEND & GEORGE BEDARD,**
Department of Educational Administration, OISE
4-482 *Students and Academics Look at School Improvement*

B3 **RICK GRAHAM & VERA TAYLOR,** Scarborough Board of Education
4-413 *Malvern Community Network: Total Community Involvement*

B4 **WILLIAM GREEN & EARL LOZON,**
2-212 Kent County Board of Education & Kent County RCSS Board
A Report on the Kent Area Administrators Group:
A New Venture in School-Community Relationships

FRIDAY, March 4 2:00 - 3:15 p.m.

C1 **ROULEEN WIGNALL,** Department of Educational Administration, OISE
4-482 *Collaboration: The Solution Impossible?*

C2 **HANNE MAWHINNEY,** University of Ottawa
2-212 *The Policy and Practice of Community Enrichment of Schools*

C3 **STEVE LAWTON,** Department of Educational Administration, OISE
4-412 *Schools of Quality: Application of Total Quality Management to Schools*

C4 **JOHN DAVIS,** Department of Educational Administration, OISE
4-413 *Partnerships in Ontario Secondary Schools*

SATURDAY, March 5 10:15 - 11:30 a.m.

D1 **GWEN BISTARD & ART DUBOYCE,** Perth County Board of Education
4-413 *Supported Co-op Program for the Developmentally Challenged*

D2 **ADRIAN GULDEMOND,** Redeemer College
4-412 *School Collaboration and Community Empowerment: An Independent Model*

D3 **NOUR ALLAHDINI,** Department of Educational Administration, OISE
4-482 *Private Resources for Public Education*

D4 **GRANT CLARKE & ARYEH GITTERMAN,** Ministry of Education and Training
2-212 *Education-Work Connections Project: Best Practices*